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ABSTRACT

This document contains papers that were presented at a 1988 conference on nonformal education for women held in Guangzhow, China, and organized by the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education in association with the Chinese Federation for Women, the Guangzhou Adult Education Association, and Caritas Hong Kong. The following 12 papers are included: "The Prospects for Women's Adult Education in China" and "A Brief Account on Chinese Institute for Women Administrators" (China Institute for Women Administrators); "Educational Situation of Women in Thailand" (Skrobanek); "The Situation of Education for Women in the Philippines" (de Vera); "Problems and Solutions for Women's Education in China" (Min); "Non-formal Education for Women in Korea" (Cheong); "Women's Education in Singapore" (Lum); "Women in Sri Lanka: Current Status and Alternative Programs in Education" (Gunawardena); "Women in Hong Kong--Adult Education" (Wong); "Fiji--Women, Education, Development" (Bola Bola); "Some Thoughts on Education and Women's Legal Rights" (Bradley); and "Explorations of Adult Education for the Rural Women of Sichuan Province" (Ming). (CML)

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STRATEGIES AND INNOVATIONS IN NONFORMAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

ASPBAE Courier No. 46

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Introduction

This issue of the Courier contains papers which were presented at a conference on **Strategies and Innovations in Nonformal Education for Women**, organised by ASPBAE, in association with the Chinese Federation for Women, the Guangzhou Adult Education Association, and Caritas Hong Kong. It was held in Guangzhou, China in November 1988 and brought together women who are involved in Nonformal Education throughout Asia and the Pacific.

Apologies of the late appearance of this issue, due to circumstances beyond my control.

A follow-up conference was held in Japan in September 1989 organised by a group of Japanese adult educators, under the leadership of Professor Makoto Yamaguchi. The aim was to further the networking which commenced in China. A report of that meeting is included in the **News** section.

This collection of papers demonstrates the diversity of activities which involve women in our region and also the problems that many face in gaining access to educational opportunities. There is evidence that this would benefit not only women, but their families and, ultimately, the country in which they live. However, in the Philippines where there are high levels of educational attainment, it has not necessarily followed that the situation of women has improved. Education is only one aspect of a complex situation including economics, politics and social relationships.

There were a number of excellent papers from Provinces of China which were are unable to include due to lack of space. One such paper is included from Sichuan and others may be reproduced later. The conference delegates tried to find out what strategies and innovations were successful in extending educational opportunities to women, especially those who are most disadvantaged. The papers provide valuable data on nonformal education for women in our region. They also highlight inadequacies in the formal system which leave a legacy of needs for the nonformal sector to meet. ASPBAE hopes that they will assist other groups looking for new, more effective, ways of meeting the needs of women in their society.

Yvonne Heslop
Editor

THE PROSPECTS FOR WOMEN'S ADULT EDUCATION IN CHINA

Presented by the China Institute for Women Administrators

China, a member of the world family, has 1.07 billion people that makes up about 1/4 of the world total population. Among them 500 million or so are women, and 300 million are adult women, who are in the present social life not only a rich human resource to bring about directly material and spiritual wealth for society but also playing important roles at home of mother, wife and daughter. To a certain extent, their progress and education affect the progress of 1/4 of the world population and families as well as the development of both China and the whole world. Therefore, to expand the education for China's adult women so as to upgrade their quality bears a crucial importance to China as well as the world.

Looking back into history, education for adult Chinese women was characterised by late start and low levels

In the last several thousand years of the Chinese civilisation, there had been many epoch-making periods of great prosperity, yet, the long history of Chinese education had been dominated by males. The feudal ethical codes of the three cardinal guides (ruler guides subjects, father guides son, and husband guides wife) and five constant virtues (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity), and the three obediences (to father before marriage, to husband after marriage, and to son after the death of husband) and the four virtues (morality, proper speech, modest manner and diligent work) advocate that the virtue of women was without ability or wisdom. Hence, women at that time were only able to learn "the ways of how to be a good woman, wife and mother" under the family and social influence. For generations, beautiful and intelligent Chinese women have been deprived of the right for receiving education.

The first step to improve women's status and to achieve equality with men had to begin with education. However, this concept was accepted by the Chinese people 100 years later than those in the western countries. Influenced by the women's rights movement in the west, the early Chinese enlightened thinker - Mr Liang Quchao - published his article in 1897 called "On Constitutional Reform and Modernization", in which he wished to uphold women's rights through providing education to them. And he attacked the traditional concept of "the virtue of women was with neither ability nor wisdom" as a way to bring calamity to the country, and he pointed out that "to provide education for women is the fundamental undertaking for the nation's survival and strength", is the basis for the nation's rejuvenation and for improving intellectual development. But, the fate of women's education in China could not be changed by the good intentions of a single scholar with ability and insight, because it was restricted by various political and economic environments and, after all, by the traditional mentality of the whole population, which was formed in the long historical process. After the Opium War in 1840, some girls schools emerged with strong feudal and comprador natures as the result of the cultural invasion to China by the imperialist powers.

natures as the result of the cultural invasion to China by the imperialist powers. In 1844, the first girls school was set up in Zhejiang Province under the name of "Zheijiang Private Girl School" by the British missionaries. By 1902, there were 4,300 girl students enrolled at all sorts of missionary schools in the country. The girls school run by the Qing government started in 1905. After the May 4th Movement, Peking University took the lead to lift the ban on enrolling female students, followed by 123 institutions of higher learning Since then, the number of women students receiving higher education has increased steadily year by year. In 1936, when China was not yet liberated, the rate of female student enrolment reached its peak in all kinds of schools then: 17.8% in institutions of higher learning, 21.1% in secondary specialised schools, 20% in general secondary schools and 25.5% in primary schools. At that time, those women who could afford to go to school were the ones from the upper class families, while the majority of labouring women who were oppressed at the bottom of the society in the poor and backward Old China never had the opportunities to study in schools. This was the case of general education; there was hardly any adult education for women since it is supplementary and a continuation of general education.

Soon after the founding of the New China, the state eliminated the unequal system that discriminated and restricted women in the field of education. Thus, a new act was staged to completely change the fate for women in education. The Constitution of China stipulates that "women enjoy equal rights with men in the fields of political, economic, cultural, social and family life." As a result, not only has general education for women flourished, but adult education for women also been placed as a key issue on the agendas of the governments. According to the statistics in 1949, 90% of women in China were illiterate. So, at that time, adult education for women was, to a great extent, offering make-up lessons on basic knowledge so as to wipe out illiteracy. Together with the announcement of the founding of the New China, a dynamic campaign to wipe out illiteracy was launched with literacy classes and make-up lessons throughout the country. The statistics show that 140 million Chineseover 50% of whom were women. became literate in the early 1950s due to consistent efforts, Hundreds of thousands of labouring women learned how to read and write by attending these classes and short programs, which enabled them to go out of their own houses to work at different production fields and many of them had become the backbone members for the construction of New China. Since then, the State Council had issued a number of documents on literacy and work-study programs, thus, some steady progress had been observed in the field of adult education for women. However, the "ten years of upheaval" - the Cultural Revolution - drove the Chinese cultural and educational cause into the "desert", where all sorts of schools were closed for the revolution under the wrong idea that "the more knowledge, the more reactionary". The whole generation of young people were prevented from studying Quite a number of adult women in China then went to work without finishing their schooling. After the cultural revolution, there had been a unique "boom" for certification education at factories, in rural areas, governmental organisations for several years, especially in the urban areas, where millions of adult women received it.

A turning point for women's adult education brought about by reform and open-up policies.

Since 1978, the Chinese people have united under one banner and the key emphasis has been on economic construction as the over-all priority, in order to terminate the poverty process and to achieve the modernisation of industry, agriculture, national defence and science and technology. The mentalities of the broad masses in China have undergone profound changes, and the turbulent waves of reform washed away the outworn concepts left over in the long history that "men are superior to women" and "men are responsible for external affairs only with women looking after internal ones". As the vigorous development of the modernisation drive and the deep-going reform on the economic system, the quantity and scope of women participants in social labour is unprecedented in our history; faced with the challenges of the competitive mechanism of "survival for superiors and elimination for inferiors", the Chinese women have also shown the greatest interest ever seen in pursuing education. This demonstrates the tremendous change in the fate for women's adult education in China.

The All China Women Federation conforms to this overall trend of reform and open-up, and has called on and mobilised all labouring women in China to make contributions to the cause of building-up the socialist modernisation with Chinese characteristics. The 5th Congress of All China Women Federation urged the women in the country to be "self-respected, self-possessed, self-regarded and self strived"; the 6th Congress stated more clearly that all women in the country should take economic construction as the core to upgrade their scientific and cultural quality so as to strengthen the capability for competition in the process of reform, to improve ideological and moral quality for forming a modern concept; and to raise up psychological quality to stimulate the spirit of self-independence and self-striving. To carry out the gist of the Congresses regarding overall improvement of the quality of women, over 100 million women in the urban and rural areas in the country took part in the literacy and scientific and technological programs at various levels and of different natures with the spirit of "vitalising China". The schools and disciplines of different types were founded to meet the needs for adult women to become professional personnel.

In the rural areas, hundreds of thousands of women have participated in production activities in order to get rid of poverty and to become rich. They are studying very hard to master various kinds of specialised knowledge and applied techniques; so far, 60% of them have grasped at least one applied technique. The Womens Federations at all levels collaborate with other social sectors to do their best to sponsor the study infrastructure for women in the countryside, where literacy classes, technical lectures, training centres and schools are organised. Up to the present, there are over 100 items available for women in the rural areas to learn, including scientific techniques in the fields of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery; in the fields of traditional crafts of weaving, embroidery, garments, leather, food processing and carving, and in the fields of certain modern techniques for financing and accounting, enterprise management, and electronics. This scientific knowledge and technique has brought great changes to the rural women. As the statistics of Hebei Provincial Women Federation, show 32.8 million

women in the countryside learned at least one applicable technique. In the vast rural areas in the country, a phenomenon of "three mores" has appeared, that is, more specialised households are led by women, more profits are created by women, and more female able persons have emerged. Women are willing to spend more energy and invest more money to learn new knowledge that can lead to prosperity. Some of them travelled thousands of kilometres to study a specific knowledge; some pay high fees to hire teachers; and some even vie with each other to attend various lectures and evening schools at their own expense. The survey done by the Worker-Peasant Education Office of Jiamui City, Heilongjiang Province on 17 housewives from "10 thousand RMB families" in the 4 villages indicates that a common feature shared by all is that they do not grudge the money spent on intelligence development. They not only actively join the technical training programs organised by their respective villages, but also go to places far away to learn skills and pay out of their own pockets. They subscribe to scientific and technical publications and newspapers so that they can become specialised personnel in the villages. Eleven families out of seventeen have at least 50% of the income earned by women with the maximum up to 80%, while in the remaining families the income earned by women also makes up 35%. Facts have shown that the levels of women's education and technical training are in direct ratio with the pace and degree of their wealth accumulation. Once the rural women grasp the techniques needed, they are not just able to create material wealth for the nation and the family, to help the family away from poverty and weakness and become rich and powerful, but also to win respect both from home and society, and more importantly, they have had their horizons broadened and their mental attitudes changed deeply. To be more specific:

* The ability to improve the education of their children. By attending training and study programs on a regular basis, women can raise their political consciousness, have a wider vision, and learn more knowledge which enables them to provide better guidance to their children's technology and will in turn exert an imperceptible but positive influence on the children so that a more healthy atmosphere can be created by bringing up their future generations.

* Stability and unity be strengthened. The role of women serves as a connecting link between relatives and neighbours in the community. By acquiring more knowledge, women get morally accomplished and increase their abilities to handle different situations, thus, they are able to deal with other people in a scientific manner and promote happiness and harmony inside and outside the home.

* A healthy and civilised way of living be established. By studying knowledge and skills, women can quickly master information on modern civilised ways of living and throw away backwardness and ignorance.

In the urban areas, there are 48 million women workers and staff working at the state-owned enterprises plus 35 million at the enterprises run by townships and villages. After the policies of reform and open-up being implemented and the mechanism of competition being introduced, the majority of these employed

women have realised that only when they possess higher vocational quality, can they meet the challenges and take the opportunities in an environment of survival for superiors and elimination for inferiors. Pounded by the wave of reform, carrier women (leaders) have devoted more actively into the cultural, technical and managerial studies at all levels and in all disciplines. It has become an irresistible deluge. The statistics at the end of 1987 show that in all kinds of adult secondary specialised schools, there were 1.66 million students, of which females made up 50%; among the enrolment of 1.85 million at adult higher education institutions, women students counted for 0.41 million. With the efforts from Womens Federations at all levels and supported by all social sectors, the rapid development of women's colleges and institutes has played an important role in helping train more qualified female personnel and upgrade their competence. Remarkable social effects have been witnessed by these institutions. So far 14 girls vocational schools and 4 vocational universities have been set up across the country with a total number of more than 10,000 graduates with intermediate or advanced level of vocational skills. On the one hand, the schools provide the personnel needed urgently by the society, and on the other, the society offers more opportunities for those trained women. The cadres' schools under the network of the Chinese Womens Federation also experienced a quick growth in recent years. According to the statistics of August, 1987, 26 provinces and autonomous regions founded their own schools or centres for womens cadres. Something worth mentioning is the growth of women adult education institutions at college level in the past few years. The 3 institutions, that is, Hunan Vocational University for Women, South China Vocational University for women and Shanxi Peihua Women University, have built up their unique features, especially the South China Vocational University for Women where the style is vigorous, the teaching is tailored, and remarkable progress has been achieved. A good reputation has been earned by the disciplines of garment designing in the University where the design and manufacture are done by the teachers and the students, and the discipline even has a fashion show team.

The growth of the China Womens Federation is contributing to the concern and attention given by Central government departments especially the State Education Commission. The Institute started to offer its first two year college certificate program in 1984, and so far 530 students have graduated successfully. At present, there are five departments in the Institute, namely the Department of Women's Movement, Pre-school Education Management, Law, Computer Application and Modern Management Science. The latter two are in the period of change from short-term training oriented to certificate education. The disciplines of this Institute are rationally set up, the faculties are qualified and the pool of enrolment is growing. The previous sessions of students graduated from this institute have been in general promoted and given heavier responsibilities; some of them have even been appointed or elected as prefectural and city leaders. While offering college certificate programs, the Institute keeps on carrying out diversified in-service and short-term training programs at different levels so as to develop the intelligence of women resource persons. In recent years, about 1,500 women cadres in the fields of science and technology and management have been trained, and they have played mainstream and model roles after returning to their posts. Among the woman factory and enterprise managers who received in-service

training at the Institute for modern entrepreneurs, many have been promoted to a higher position. As a by-product of the first women entrepreneurs in-service training program, the National Association of Women Entrepreneurs was founded with about 300 members and now has become an influential non-governmental organisation.

In summary, the development of adult education for women has been accelerated by reform and the opening up to outside world policies; a contingent of women professional personnel has taken shape with "ideals, education, morality and discipline". They are holding up half the sky for the modernisation drive in the country. The women's liberation movement in China has broken away with its old territories and the first light in the morning for cultivating new frontiers is already in sight.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT ON CHINESE INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS

The Chinese Institute for Women Administrators is situated on the Western Tiananmen Street in Beijing, with Shishahai Lake on its left and Beijai Park on its opposite. It has beautiful scenery and is convenient to reach by public transportation, thus, its geographical location is suburban.

The Institute was created by the All China Federation in 1949, with the objective of training Chinese women management personnel. It is an adult institution of higher education for women and formerly known as Women Cadres' Training School of All China Women Federation. There are more than ten thousand women cadres being trained for the Chinese socialist construction and for the cause of women's liberation. In order to meet the requirements for the women cadres working at all federations in the new era that they should be "revolutionised, intellectualised, professionalised and young", the school was upgraded into All China Women Federation's Management Cadres College. s of Women Federation, so as to open it to all women for education. In April 1987, the State Education Commission approved to change its name to Chinese Institute for Women Administrators.

Currently, there are three departments in the Institute namely Department of Womens Movement, Department of Pre-school Education Management and Department of Law. The Department of Womens Movement is the only one in the country to offer courses on women theories, and to training womens movement theorists as well as management cadres for women affairs. Within the department there are four disciplines; Marxist theories on womens' liberation, history of women movement, management of women federation business and sociology. About 25 courses, both on general subjects and on special topics, are offered in the department. Selected reading on classical works, Chinese and foreign histories on women movement, management of women affairs, studies on leadership, introduction to sociology, family sociology, female physiology and health

protection, women psychology, social investigation methods and etc. The Department of pre-school education management is mainly responsible for training administrative and managerial staff for pre-school education and school masters for kindergartens and daycare centres. The department also has four disciplines, namely the discipline of pre-school pedagogy, of kindergarten/daycare centre management, child psychology and child hygienics. They offer 26 courses in both general and specialised subjects such as management of kindergarten/daycare centres, introduction on leadership studies, general psychology, management psychology, pre-school hygienics, pre-school psychology, pre-school pedagogy research on kindergartens/daycare centres and methodology. In addition, there are 5 optional courses which are musical theories and appreciation, aesthetics, computer ABC and computer languages, and sociology.

The main objectives of the Department of Law are to train legal workers who protect the legitimate rights and interests of women and children. There are 2 disciplines in the department -- basic theories of science and law and departmental law, offering 25 courses on general and specific subjects. The major specific subject courses are introduction to law science, Constitution, criminal law, civil law, criminal suit law, civil suit law, marriage law, economic law studies, administration law, international law, history of Chinese legal system, notary lawyer, legal documentation, introduction to legal articles protecting the legitimate rights and interests of women and children, criminal psychology, ethics, and etc. The institute is in the process of establishing a new department under the name of modern management so that more women could work in the fields of economy and science and technology. Up to the present, some training courses on enterprise management, export oriented economy and applied computer have been offered by the new department.

The institute insists on running diversified programs. While offering a good program at institute diploma level, it also conducts different types of short-term in-service training courses on various subjects for women cadres working at the Women Federations of all levels in line with "The decision on reform and developing adult education" by the State Education Commission. For example, the courses on psychological counselling, on secretary training, on training of teachers for women theories, and workshops on audio-visual equipment, on position training for city heads of women federation and kindergarten masters. The institute is also engaged in active scientific research activities. Since 1984, the faculty members of the institute have published several dozens of academic papers at different publications and on conferences about women, children, family, marriage and ethics. About 20 books have been published as well, and another dozen of academic works and textbooks such as "Dictionary and Historical and Contemporary Well-known Female figures in China and Abroad" will be released soon. There are 180 faculties and supporting staffs in the Institute, 80 out of whom are teachers and technicians (13 professors and associate professors, 26 lecturers). Besides, there are 10 part-time professors. It is planned that within the next 3-5 years the number of full-time faculty and supporting staffs will increase to 300 gradually. The audio-visual equipment and printing facilities are quite advanced, and the library has undergone a very rapid growth.

The college enrols students from all over the country and the students came from 30 branches, autonomous regions and municipalities. They are selected from the ones who passed the unified entrance examinations for adult high education based on competition. The students have at least 5 years of working experience as government employees before entering the college with an average age of 30. Many of them came from the remote areas and minority ethnic regions, and they devoted themselves to the socialist modernisation construction and to the cause of women liberation. They have a correct attitude towards their studies and achieved excellent results. After 2 years of formal studies and training, they will become professional personnel and take various posts.

As the largest adult womens' institution for higher learning and sponsored by the all China Women Federation, the development of the institute received great attention and care from the central government and All China Women Federation. The state leaders and the secretaries of All China Women Federation secretariat often visit the institute to give lectures and reports. The college constantly gets support and help from different social sectors as well as from overseas and it takes responsibilities for international exchanges. In recent years the institute received delegations and scholars from more than 20 foreign countries for visits and academic exchanges.

The institute has a branch in Shandong Province with a student body of 600, and the campus occupies 80 Mu of land located in a scenic spot on the suburb of Jinan City.

Field Trip to Panyu November 1988

EDUCATIONAL SITUATION OF WOMEN IN THAILAND

Siriporn Skrobanek, Foundation for Women Thailand

"Women should have equal opportunity to get higher education, but one has to be cautious not to let them take away men's jobs. They should not be arrogant, nor quarrel with men. Teach them to be a woman and be cautious always of their femininity."

(Prince Chainatnarendhorn, Minister of Education 1914)

Education in Thailand in the old days was exclusively for boys. The reason was due to the fact that education was provided by monks in temples. Thereby only boys could get access to the traditional system of education and learn how to read and write whereas girls were taught in the home on traditional feminine tasks in order to serve man and family members. Thai women had internalised via socialisation that education had nothing to do with women and women's role was to support man who was the "front leg of the elephant".

Only in the period of early penetration of capitalism, after the Bowring Treaty with Great Britain in 1855, could women of aristocracy get access to education initiated by the royal court and provided by foreign women teachers. In 1901, a school for girls built by King Rama V (1868-1910) in memory of his beloved wife, opened its door for daughters of ordinary people. The law on compulsory primary education for boys and girls was promulgated in 1921. Higher or university education for women was obtained only after a long debate between women and authorities responsible for national education.

According to authorities of that period, women should have education in order to better fulfil their role as housewife and mother. Thereby women were the offered, besides reading and writing, subjects enforcing traditional roles of women such as cuisine, embroidery, floral art and feminine manners. The ideology of housewife was therefore introduced and propagated by western women to daughters of aristocracy. After the change from absolute monarchy to constitutional democracy, domestic science or home economics was included in the curriculum for girls in secondary schools.

Even though primary education has been compulsory for boys and girls since 1921, the illiterate female population of Thailand is higher than male. Female literacy rate - according to the Report of Literacy Survey in 1985 of the National Statistics Bureau, is 84.4% against 91% for males. The highest rate of illiterate female population is in the south where women are restricted by Islam rules.

National Development Plan

Only in the Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1982-1986), were women recognised as a special target group of economic and social development. Women - according to the criticism expressed in the Plan - have to face various problems such as low education and illiteracy, poor health and lack of socio-political participation. The National Development Plan has recognised for the first time the double burden of women involved in housework/childcare and wage work contributing to the unequal status of women in the labour force and which manifests itself in terms of lower wages, less employment and promotion opportunities and less social benefits etc.

The Fifth National Development Plan, identifies five areas of prime concern for women's development. They are economics, education, health, religious and cultural activities, as well as political and administrative participation.

In the area of education, women and girls in the age group 14-22 years shall be provided with vocational training in order to raise their annual per capita income to at least 5000 Baht (US$200). Non-formal education services shall be provided to women in the whole kingdom.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned aims, the following measures are recommended:

- to promote formal and non-formal education for women especially for women in rural and congested urban areas.
- to disseminate basic information to women through mass media functional literacy and peer groups.
- to train women in labour laws.
- to promote and support non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to disseminate religious and cultural knowledge to women in urban and rural areas.

Twenty Year Plan for Womens Development

Besides the National Development Plan, Thailand has also laid down a Long Term Plan for womens development from 1982-2001. Education is included with specific aims: all women under the age of 35 years shall participate in compulsory education and 80 per cent of the age group between 35-45 years shall receive adult education (functional literacy), the number of women to have higher education should be increased, especially in vocational education which have long been male dominated subjects, in order to alter the asymmetric sexual division of labour.

Case Study

Women at Construction Sites*

"I came from a province in the Northeast. We are landless peasants. My husband and I had rented a piece of land in order to grow tapioca. Besides, we worked for other farmers. When the landowner wanted his land back, my husband and I decided to find work in Bangkok. Both of us have to work and we try to save some money to pay back our debts and to buy a small plot of land. We have two children, three and five years old. They live with us at the construction site. I don't like to live in Bangkok. It is stinky, dirty and there are lots of mosquitoes. My children always get sick and so do I. Just now, I have high fever and can't go to work for seven days already.

I have four years of schooling and work here as unskilled worker. My husband is a carpenter, he earns more. Most of what we earn we spend on food. Life in Bangkok is very expensive. I hope that after a few years I can save enough money to go back to my home village."

(interview with Boon age 24)

There is a large number of women from rural areas who share a similar fate to Boon. Due to export-oriented agriculture, "green revolution", and the expansion of agri-business, the remaining subsistence production in agriculture which is managed predominantly by women, is disappearing rapidly, thus contributing to the steady migration to urban centres. The urban centres, on the other hand, seem to promise more challenging jobs, more cash income, and various other amenities. According to the National Statistical Office, in 1978 the total of female migrants to Bangkok exceeded the number of male migrants. There are basically two reasons why women go to towns and cities, either they are trying to get employment themselves, or accompany their husband or other family members who are themselves seeking jobs in towns and cities.

However, the number of well-paid jobs for migrant women is even less than for men, if we excluded the female employment in the sex industry. Only a small number find employment in the so-called "formal sector", ie the modern, highly productive and efficiently organised sector of economy mostly controlled by foreign investors, which seems to promise higher wages. Migrant women, who are generally unskilled and have only primary education are ranked as workers of "secondary status". As far as they do get jobs, they mostly enter the service sector as domestics workers which has deplorable working conditions and low wages.

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* an excerpt from the Feasibility Study on : Skill Training Programs for the Self-Promotion of Women at Construction Sites in Bangkok, by Siriporn Skrobanek, 1984

Due to the recent rapid development of the construction industry, migrants from rural areas can find employment as construction workers. According to the survey conducted by the Social Research Institute of Chulalongkorn University, in co-operation with the Foundation for Children in 1982, 79.01 per cent of construction workers previously worked in agriculture, and 28 per cent of these workers were female. Among unskilled workers more than 50 per cent were women.

Women in the construction industry have almost no chance to become skilled. Around 79 per cent of all women are unskilled construction workers; this figure remains more or less constant whether the women are married or unmarried. The figures for male construction workers, however, differ considerably from those for women. Only 33.56 per cent of all unmarried male workers are rated as unskilled, and among married male construction workers the figure drops to only 9.95 per cent. There are primarily two reasons for the stagnant development of skills of women: women have less opportunity to develop their skills because of the double burden, and they tend to be rated by employers as unskilled in order to pay less wage. Female construction workers who are unskilled receive a lower than minimum wage.

Job promotion and skills training for women at the construction sites surveyed in 1984, were practically non-existent. If this situation continues, women will remain unskilled workers throughout their lives unless a relative or husband who has skill in a particular job, gives them some instruction; or they have a very good relationship with foremen or subcontractors. For the latter case, women might be sexually exploited. This differs greatly from male workers, who can move in a short period of time from unskilled to semi-skilled status.

It was found that most women are able to recognise the fact of their subordination at the work place and in the family, but do not yet perceive these manifestations in a critical enough way which would enable them to overcome these problems by their own conscious action.

If we compare the role of women in rural areas with the role they play at a construction site in Bangkok, women's autonomy is certainly reduced in the urban setting. It is therefore no wonder that more than half of the women interviewed preferred to live in their home village, where - according to them - life is easier and cheaper. For the minority preferring to stay in the city, their arguments referred mainly to better job opportunities. This is understandable since most women left the rural areas because they could not produce enough due to drought or insufficient land, and a certain number of them belonged to landless peasant families. Other arguments in favour of living in Bangkok referred to better medical care; better educational facilities for the children; more convenience; and a more colourful life. Some of these points may be valid, but it appears rather as a repetition of the illusionary image of urban life which attracts so many rural people to Bangkok, although very few of them can benefit from even a few aspects of these urban blessings.

THE SITUATION OF EDUCATION FOR WOMEN IN THE PHILIPPINES

Adora Faye De Vera, (GABRIELA)

There is an extreme lack of empirical data on the situation of women in the Philippines in all fields, even in education. Statistics from government agencies rarely include gender analysis. On the other hand, non-government agencies efforts and researchers in the academic field are just starting to zero in on women, so that national statistics are also scarce. What we attempt to present here, therefore, is not so much a statistical report but an overview of women's education based on our own organisation's experiences.

Formal Education

Literacy

The Philippines boasts of a high 82.6% literacy rate for women, one of the highest in Southeast Asia. Only 5.8 million Filipinos, male and female, are reported illiterate. Enrolment rates are high at the elementary level, with a mean of 8,700,000 enrollers per school year. But numbers are misleading, if the quality of literacy is to be studied.

If enrolment rates are high, dropout rates are also high. Seventeen per cent of children entering school during the school year 1969-1970 failed to reach Grade II, 59% completed Grade IV, 46% proceeded to secondary schooling and only 34% completed secondary school.

The official measure of literacy that census takers base their data on is the Grade IV level, instead of asking "Can you read and write?" This is easier to record, of course, but also very inaccurate. Surveys show that among today's average elementary school graduates, only 65% of the required materials for their levels had been absorbed, with major deficiencies in reading, math and languages. They also suffer from functional illiteracy, or the inability to read newspapers and comparable materials. And for those who live in the interior villages where there exists a great lack of reading materials, most of those considered literate revert to illiteracy after several years. Statistics on literacy, therefore, hardly show the real picture.

Only around half of our literate women ever go beyond the basics of reading and writing, some only to the extent of being able to sign their names. Less than half ever get to secondary school.

In the rural areas where 70% of the Filipino population lives, the official literacy rate drops even further. In 1980, the National Census Office recorded rural female literacy at 76%, way below the national rate of 84%.

Quality of Education

There is cause for concern regarding the quality of education. Rural public schools, specially in the upland areas, often operate only on a Tuesday or Thursday basis. Many use outmoded textbooks, or no textbooks at all.

Faculty quality also shows something about how much students are learning. Seventy per cent of the required units in education courses are for teaching methods, and little stress is given to the mastery of the content of education. In fact, a recent test conducted on elementary school teachers showed that their knowledge of bilingualism in English and Filipino differed little from Grade IV level students.

The economic status of teachers also affects faculty quality. Teachers are grossly underpaid with only P2,000.00 salary per month, way below the basic P4,800.00 per month* needed to keep an average Filipino family above the poverty line. Their efforts to gain additional income outside their profession results in a lower quality of instruction, since they are often more busy selling sausages, bags, shorts and other goods to their co-teachers or other school personnel. According to the School Health and Nutrition Centre of the Department of Education, some 30,000 public school teachers suffer from pulmonary tuberculosis, possibly due to overwork and malnutrition.

With the quality of education comes the question of direction -- What have our people been learning? Whose interest does our education system serve?

In 1985, a survey conducted among elementary school children in Metro Manila indicated that the majority of them wanted to become US citizens when they grew up, a significant number wanted to be Japanese, while others wanted to become citizens of other countries like Saudi Arabia and India. Only a handful wanted to remain as Filipinos.

Since the 1960s, highly educated Filipinos -- engineers, doctors, educators, nurses - have been migrating by the thousands yearly to Europe and the United States in search of better opportunities for personal advancement. By the 1980s even construction workers, domestic helpers and laboratory technicians have joined them, adding "brawn" to the country's acute "brain drain". Indeed, it seems that being able to get out of one's own country is considered the crowning glory of a Filipino's personal achievement.

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* Based on the cost of the minimum nutritional requirements for a family of six.

For those who stay, moreover, education seems to have little to do with their decision. Peasant and urban poor women I have interviewed through the years responded similarly to the question of how formal education helped them in their lives: It taught them to read and write. This response came even from women who were able to reach secondary school.

Availability

This is not to say that there is no quality education for women in the Philippines. But more often, this is beyond reach, due either to cultural or economic (more often economic) factors. Although it shows that among peasant women who do not graduate from the elementary grades, women generally get to finish one or two levels higher than their male counterparts, records on higher level schooling show otherwise. The overwhelming majority of male graduates in high school and college levels reveal a gender bias against women on the question of accessibility of education.

Private institutions, many of which are exclusive girl's schools, offer education at P4,000.00 to P15,000.00 per student per school year, half the annual income of an average Filipino worker. This price excludes expenses for uniforms, transportation, school supplies, library fees, gymnasium fees, laboratory fees, miscellaneous fees and endless contributions. Although statistics of this nature are hard to come by, it is popular knowledge that many female students in Metropolitan Manila's university belt work as call-girls (part-time prostitutes) or as kept women of wealthy businessmen just to be able to finish their schooling.

The public school system upon which Philippine education for the poor is based, suffers severe problems. There is such a shortage of school rooms that it is common for elementary schools in Metro Manila to squeeze in as many as 60 to 70 pupils in one class, some even sitting on floors due to lack of desks and chairs. To date, there are only 239,814 school rooms in public elementary schools servicing 8.27 million pupils. Moreover, 35% of these are dilapidated and must be replaced, while 8.8% require repairs. The estimated classroom shortage is 15,124 units.

An artificial teacher shortage also plagues the public school system, part of which is caused by the massive outflow of migrant women to other countries. The inability of the government t provide protection and supervision for teachers in far flung areas is another cause. One estimate is that there are 10,000 "ghost teachers" (recorded but non-existent) in Mindanao alone. Last year, the Department of Education investigated a report of some 150 ghost teachers in Lanao del Sur, the results of which were not made public.

Since the elementary level in public schools is the most accessible to grassroots women, this already presents a great disadvantage to their opportunities for education.

There is even a growing number of Filipino females who may never get this opportunity for education at all. Young children are increasingly being sucked into the labour force of the informal sector. In Metro Manila, street children as

young as eight years of age can be seen hawking garlands, newspapers, gum, cigarettes and towels; washing or watching cars for a fee; begging, scavenging garbage piles for reusable materials; or buying bottles and scrap metal. In the sugar regions and among agricultural workers, children form part of the unpaid labour force. It is believed that the estimated 500,000 to 700,000 households comprising landless agricultural workers have at least one child worker each. About 20,000 children are now working as prostitutes for foreign pederasts around various tourist spots.

Adult Education

Government efforts at adult education are centred on vocational and technical courses to develop marketable skills and thus help adults gain employment. These are implemented by the Bureau of Continuing Education under the Department of Education, Culture and Sports Rizal Experimental Station, Pilot School of Cottage Industries, University of Life Home Study Program, National Youth and Manpower Council, and the UP Los Banos College of Agriculture.

There are also government programs for functional literacy which managed to reach about 26,000 people during the first quarter of this past year. Of this, 54% were women.

There are, however, no government adult education programs focusing on women, although some courses are considered natural "women's courses" such as dressmaking, hair and make-up, manicure and pedicure, family planning and culinary arts.

Some private enterprises also offer adult education programs, mostly through television.

Many adult education programs are widely implemented by non-government organisations and institutions. Organisations dealing with specific concerns such as unionising, and peasant organising, all have educational programs for their members. Various women's institutions and resource centres such as the Centre for Women's Resources, the Women's Centre for Development Education and International Studies, Women's Studies and Resource Centre, Parent's Alternative, and the Cordillera Women's Education and Research Centre, offer education programs specifically for women.

We in GABRIELA, a women's coalition, also implement our own education program for women through our various departments and commissions or in co-operation with our member organisations and institutions, such as the SAMAKANA (association of urban poor women, KMK (Movement of Women Workers), and AMIHAN (Federation of Peasant Women).

Considering the problems and limitations which the majority of women face in acquiring formal education, the importance of adult or non-formal education cannot be over-emphasised. But, like formal education, its thrust, content and scope must be given attention. For instance, how much have these adult education

programs contributed to the development of women? And development in what sense? How can adult education help lessen the glaring inequality in our society?

Obstacles to Women's Education

As it is, education still has to be maximised and improved to be able to realise its contributions to women and to the nation as a whole. But already, obstacles stand in the way of its development, concrete and inextricably interwoven into the country's general problems. It is a sad fact that these obstacles are also built, to a certain extent, on the miseducation and lack of education of our people.

Foreign Control

The biggest obstacle to a relevant and accessible education is the almost total control by foreign interests of our country's economy. Throughout history, education has been used to mould our values and perceptions into accepting our status as a modern semi-colony. So central was the role of education in this aspect that the Department of Education was the last government agency to be turned over to Filipino hands prior to independence in 1945. Exempting modern technological subjects, the thrust, content and methods of education today differs very little from its pre-independence status. Until now, despite all the controversy of adopting the national language as the medium of instruction, schools continue turning out "little brown brothers"; Filipinos whose identity with their country runs only skin-deep, whose interests, outlook and aspirations invariably lean towards the colonisers.

The lop-sided economic development of our country due to foreign economic control also gives rise to problems, which indirectly affect education, such as poverty and internal political conflicts.

Poverty/lack of resources

Despite all the richness of its natural rsources, the Philippines is in an economic crisis, with 76%* of families living on and below the poverty line. This affects all aspects of women's lives, one of which is education.

Poverty is a function of illiteracy and low quality of education. Not only does it render schooling out of the reach of a majority of Filipinos, it also prevents our maximisation of education.

The prohibitive cost of education and the low faculty quality due to poverty have already been discussed. Aside from these, the daily struggle for survival also forces our women to shift their time and energy to more direct income producing

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* This is based on Mangahas' measure of poverty incidence by perceived variables. The World Bank places it at 45% of the population, while the Women's Research and Resource Centre places the figure at 80%.

activities. Case studies among peasant and urban poor women indicate this as one of the most common reasons for dropping out of school followed by difficulties in meeting dues or school requirements, and the inaccessibility of schools to their place. This lack of time due to income generation efforts is also faced by many members of people's organisations, and often, the men get the priority for meetings and discussions, with women even taking over their place in production.

Health problems resulting in poor absorption are also poverty-related. Although the Philippines is the 14th largest food producer, 80% of Filipinos lack all nutrients except niacin, and 70-80% of school children suffer from one or two forms of malnutrition. Reports of students collapsing during the flag ceremony or in the first period of class are not uncommon.

Maximisation of education by the mass media is also affected, since many families are too poor to have television sets, which many private education programs utilise. The use of projectors and other media is also impossible in many places which are inaccessible to motorised transportation and electricity.

The poverty of our nation puts the focus on the question of priorities. The government seems unable to put its resources into education. Only 12.96% of this year's budget was allocated to education. Meanwhile, 36.21%* went to service an external debt of $28B, none of which benefited the Filipino people, and 9.83% went to defence and public order despite the fact that $125M US military aid this year was already being spent for this purpose.

Non-government organisations that implement education programs among grassroots women face the perennial lack of material and financial resources, with most of our funds dependent only on donations and grants, thus limiting our reach.

Sexism and other Cultural Obstacles

The prevalent view in the Philippines is that education is a means for getting a better job more than it is a tool for the development of human beings as effective members of society. Thus, subjects/courses are geared towards employment in multinationals or for export labour. This results in significant stereotyping of women's courses--nuring, midwifery and medical technology so that they can get jobs as domestic helpers or governesses in Hong Kong, Singapore and Europe.

These gender stereotypes also work within families. Daughters are encouraged to take up secretarial or midwifery courses to enable them to get employed with the minimum time spent in schooling.

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* As of June 1987, 83% of our export earnings were used to pay for debts. The proposed 1989 budget allocation for debt service is 44%, or P97.7 billion.

The present curriculum in the country's school also tends to reinforce gender stereotypes, specially in elementary and high school textbooks. Although the National Commission on Women, a government agency, has formulated a policy to monitor and change the sexist content of Philippine education, hardly any change has been felt in the school system.

In the countryside, the view that women need less education then men persists. Most women have to stop schooling after the elementary grades so that the family's meagre resources can be concentrated on the education of her brothers. Though many women themselves do not hold onto such a view, they are hardly in a position to challenge the pressures of the family. Often, they are only able to avail themselves of higher education by showing a more superior academic performance than the best of their brothers, or sometimes by supporting themselves through school.

Among the grassroots, women's NGO's also encounter problems concerning lack of support from men. Mixed organisations often place women's education in the lowest priority for their members, and some husbands even view women's education with suspicion and try to prevent their wives from attending these.

Lack of Support Systems for Women

Women with children experience problems in attending education programs due to the lack of affordable day-care services and the pressures of housework and income-generation. If the husband is deeply involved in a people's organisation or other political work, the problem becomes more complex, for the wife almost invariably takes up the chores and family duties that the husband leaves behind, leaving no room for her involvement in community affairs.

Political Conflict

The Philippines was under a dictatorship for almost two decades, wherein all venues for liberal thinking and critical analysis were discouraged or even illegalised. This had a significant effect on students who spent most of their formative years and formal schooling in an atmosphere of authoritarianism.

In 1974, a few months after Martial Law was declared, a new curriculum recommended by the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippines Education was implemented, which stressed technical and vocational courses and the values of discipline and obedience to authority. New textbooks extolling Marcos's "New society", his and his wife's lives and exploits, were also produced and distributed massively. Today, many schools still use them, for lack of replacements.

In our highly-charged political set-up today, non-government organisations are severely limited in their education programs, especially in urban poor communities and far-flung villages, because of intense militarisation. Instructors and organisers have been harassed, if not actually harmed, on many occasions. This year alone, 82 persons involved in the people's organisations have been reported missing, abducted by rightist forces. Villagers or urban poor community dwellers are

likewise harassed when participating in seminars or discussion groups initiated by cause-oriented organisations. In July this year, more than twenty women who belong to an urban poor organisation and to a breastfeeding group, were arrested by the military in their community and presented to the press as armed city partisans. Women are particularly vulnerable to these harassments, being the ones usually left behind at home during the military's zoning operations. Our organisation has listed women organisers who have been victims of abuse by military and paramilitary men.

Bombings, strafings and forced evacuations which became widespread under the present administration have dislocated thousands of families, causing disruption of both formal education for children and adult education for their parents.

Alternative Education for Women: GABRIELA's Continuing Efforts

With such a situation prevailing in the Philippines, a really meaningful education program can only be one that advances social change. For as long as social-political structures exist that severely limit and distort the development of women even as the development of the whole country is limited and distorted, "neutral", abstract education will only serve to maintain the prevailing order.

Thrust and Content

GABRIELA considers alternative women's education as education for change -- in women's lives, in their appreciation of themselves, in their society. It should be liberating not only in the intellectual realm, but in terms of the whole person: socio-emotional, political and economic needs. Thus, education programs are never implemented alone, but as important components of organising and political or socio-economic programs.

GABRIELA's education program is focused on the needs of grassroots women: peasants, workers and urban poor, where the majority of our 35,000 members belong. This program has two targets: 1) consciousness-raising and 2) skills-development.

Consciousness-raising is aimed at liberating the minds of women from the stultifying effects of a male-dominated and imperialist-controlled culture. Among its contents are feminism, nationalism, her story, analysis of women's problems, and strategies for women's liberation.

Skills development, on the other hand, hopes to teach otherwise disadvantaged women the skills needed to effect change in their personal lives and in society in general. These are skills training seminars and workshops on news-writing, poetry writing, healthcare, public speaking, instruction work, and others.

Among the education courses that GABRIELA has implemented and is implementing on a nationwide scale are:

Consciousness-raising:

- women's orientation (the oppression of women, national situation, the need for a women's movement, strategies for liberation)
- introduction to the women's movement (short course on the common conditions of women, the need for a women's movement, its aims, organisations and principles)
- women on land reform (the need for a genuine and pro-women land reform program, its features, the role of women in ensuring the success of land reform)
- women's legislative agenda (a study of the new family code and the laws that GABRIELA feels should be instituted for women)
- women and human rights (the effects of human rights violations and violence against women, how women can work for the eradication of these abuses)
- women and the US Bases (the nature of the RP-US Bases Agreement, effects of the presence of bases on women, strategies for action)

Skills development

- seminar-workshop on news-writing and lay-out (the need for feminist writers, principles of news-writing, tips for better press releases
- speaker's training (principles and tips for public speaking, content discussions, workshop and critique of practice speeches)
- instructor's training (content and method of facilitating women's education)
- campaign management (need for women's collective action, picking out significant women's issues, forms and venues of women's action)
- project proposal making (studying project objectives, methods of implementation, phasing, budgeting)
- training of para-legal workers (studying women's legal rights, methods of documentation, legal procedures)

- healthcare training (nutrition, prevention, recognition and management of common diseases and accidents in women and children)
- child-care training (situation of children, needs of children, role of parents, the learning process and stages of development, story-telling skills, basic first-aid etc)
- poster making workshops (basics of graffiti and poster composition)
- poetry writing (basics of verse, rhyme, measure and content)
- co-operatives management training (how co-operatives work, book-keeping etc)
- self-defense for women

Methods

Consistent with our view of alternative education, GABRIELA's programs present not only alternative subjects and ideas but also methods. From the outset, the choice of particular topics, curricula, and course design are arrived at by popular consensus, with grassroots women identifying their own education needs and the time and effort they are capable of contributing for course development.

In studying the topics, the evocative method is used extensively. Workshops and group discussions are used in place of teacher-centred lectures. Cultural forms such as skits and drawings are also used, together with slide shows and games.

The seminars and trainings are designed to be easily understood and attended by grassroots women. Most are short or staggered to allow them time to finish their work and avoid too much dislocation at home and in the workplace. It has been a policy by GABRIELA's member organisations to include day-care or play-group activities for children in their education plans.

Serious though our efforts are, we have a difficult way ahead. The obstacles to women's education previously mentioned are very concrete, and the possibility for further deterioration of our nation's economic and political situation looms close. Our education department in GABRIELA started to synthesise and improve on our experiences only this year, amid so many other women's concerns. The modules in our education courses have to be upgraded with the experiences of the past education programs. We still have to produce more manuals based on these modules, in forms that grassroots women can easily use and echo. The production of more education materials such as slide or puppet shows still needs to be implemented. And most of all, we must continuously strengthen our organisations in all aspects, so that our education courses will not remain in the realm of discussion.

Education is to be a vital tool for development. It has been used to miseducate and therefore enslave, but it is now also being used to liberate women and the whole oppressed people of our country. Mainstream or formal education in our schools continues to be inaccessible and irrelevant to our grassroots women. But riding on the crest of an active people's movement for social change, an emerging, alternative education that is both liberative and grassroots oriented is now being advanced by these particular women.

Adora Faye De Vera on Field Trip to Panyu, November 1988

PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN CHINA

Xu Min

There are many problems in women's education in China. These problems can be identified in the following four paragraphs:

Educational status quo can not cope with the arduous tasks of women's education.

China is a developing country. The literacy level of Chinese women is much lower than that of women in the developed countries. It is also lower than that of Chinese male adults. Generally speaking, women's education in China has two tasks. One is to universalise the education of women and the other is to raise the level of such education. At present, there are 220 million illiterates and semi-illiteracy is still very heavy. On the other hand, there is an imbalanced development of education on practical skills for rural women with concentration in few areas and leaving large areas unserved. Even for those areas where education on practical skills is relatively developed, the level of such education is low with weak competition and momentum for development. In cities and urban areas, the quality of women workers should be raised in order to cope with challenges imposed by the optimisation of work force and market-oriented production in enterprises. Many job-waiting women need to be trained for the purpose of seeking adequate jobs. There are 2.4 million professional women working in fields of science and technology, which make up one third of the total number of professionals in China. Nevertheless, women professionals who hold senior titles only total 11.69&. All the professional women need to upgrade their knowledge through continuing education so as to enable them to bring their talent into full play in their future work. The task of women's education of all kinds is heavy and urgent. However, the State presently lacks overall planning and strategic policies for women's education within the whole educational system. The present system of adult education with narrowly-defined subjects and inflexibility cannot meet the demands of women's education from literacy education to postsecondary continuing education. The number of women's colleges is small with poor conditions and inadequate subject areas. Many new subjects conducive to the development of women cannot be offered. The development of women's education is incompatible with the present education situation in China.

The old traditional thinking of "man is superior than women" is still an obstacle of women development. This thinking has increased the burden of women's education.

The traditional thinking of "man is superior than women" may be traced back to several thousand years. Despite the theoretical criticism of such thinking, people, including women themselves, still tend to be conservative towards this idea for two reasons. The first reason is that to overcome the traditional idea that nature needs socio-economic backup, ie material civilisation and spiritual civilisation. The second reason is that the issue of human reproduction does not have proper

social compensation. As a result of this, some departments refuse to take in women in the process of recruitment and enrolment. Some departments even raise the admission requirement for women thus putting the women in an unequal position in competition with men. As a result of this, many women have lost the opportunity of getting a job or being educated. The difficulty encountered by female university graduates in getting a job in recent years is a good example to show that the social obligations of women's education, especially women's higher education, should be strengthened. Talking about primary education, the dropout rate of girl students is seriously high. According to the statistics in 1987, the number of dropouts in primary schools reached 3 million, which makes up 2.8% of the total primary school population. Among them, 2.4 million were girl students, occupying 80% of the total dropouts. This has resulted in the creation of a new generation of illiterates and vicious cycle of low-level education for women.

Heavy economic burden and family affairs force many women to stay away from school education.

It is estimated by a survey that annual cost per women student (including tuition, book allowance, transportation and incidentals) is about 368.72 Yuan (Chinese currency). Because of the full-time or half-time study, each working woman has to lose some of her salary and bonus amounting to 413.66 Yuan. When putting the sums of money together, the grand total a working woman has to pay for her education is 782.38 Yuan, which surpasses the average worker's wages per year. The result of the survey indicated that there were 26% of women who can not attend schools for economic reasons or for fear of the reduction of their incomes.

Most mature women are usually mothers of children with heavy family chores. It is estimate that married women students, prior to the admission to schools, have to spend 5 hours per day doing family chores. After being admitted, the time they spend taking care of family chores ranges from 2.5 hours to 6 hours per day. A sample survey conducted by the Demographic Research Centre of Hangzhou University indicated that 16.13& of the married women students studying at various colleges of continuing education in Zhejiang province complained that their family chores had affected their studies. Due to the heavy family chores, most married women students do not have much time to review their lessons. Some of them unfortunately gave up their studies.

The work of women's education has been improved greatly in the process of reform. Nevertheless, many new issues need to be addressed. The present theoretical studies on women's education are far behind the actual development. A guiding principle should be identified in seeking the solution of problems encountered by women's education. All the solutions must be in line with China's own situation and realities. Based on this principle, five solutions are generated as follows:

To establish a system of women's education and to formulate an overall development plan for women's education.

In view of the present situation of women's education in China, the system can be divided into primary education, secondary technical education, college education in science and technology and modern management education. Each level of education should have clearly-defined objectives aimed at fulfilling overall development plan of women's education. the overall plan should be made in line with social demands and women's situation. A balance between the issue of universal education for women and the issue of upgrading should be properly handled. The percentage of woman college students should be increased and womens colleges developed thus encouraging rural women to receive higher education. New subjects closely-related to the development of social production should be offered for the purpose of upgrading the quality and competitiveness of working women in industry, agriculture and tertiary business.

To carry out reform on the existing management system and ways of education in colleges for adult education so as to meet the needs of women's education.

All the colleges for adult education should try to offer a variety of courses at different levels. This is to say, apart from regular degree programs, certificate programs, on-the-job training courses and other short-term courses of socio economic and cultural value should also be conducted. In the degree programs, some flexibility should be built in to suit women's learning needs. such as completing courses at one's own pace and credit accumulation method. In terms of ways of education, it is desirable to conduct distance education by using AV and correspondence means of education.

To seek financial support from various sources in order to promote the development of the colleges and to reduce student financial burden.

The conditions in colleges for adult education are nowhere near as good as the conditions in regular universities, especially in terms of funding. The condition of women's colleges are even worse. In order to overcome the financial difficulty in running the colleges, the colleges for adult education, especially the women's colleges should try every means possible to seek assistance at home and abroad. In the meantime, they should actively organise fund raising activities for education, open up economic entities and increase financial sources. On the other hand, the colleges should try to reduce the tuition time to provide students with study/work opportunities.

To take an active part in social consultation activities and to urge the whole society to show concern for the development of women's education and the promotion of male and female equality.

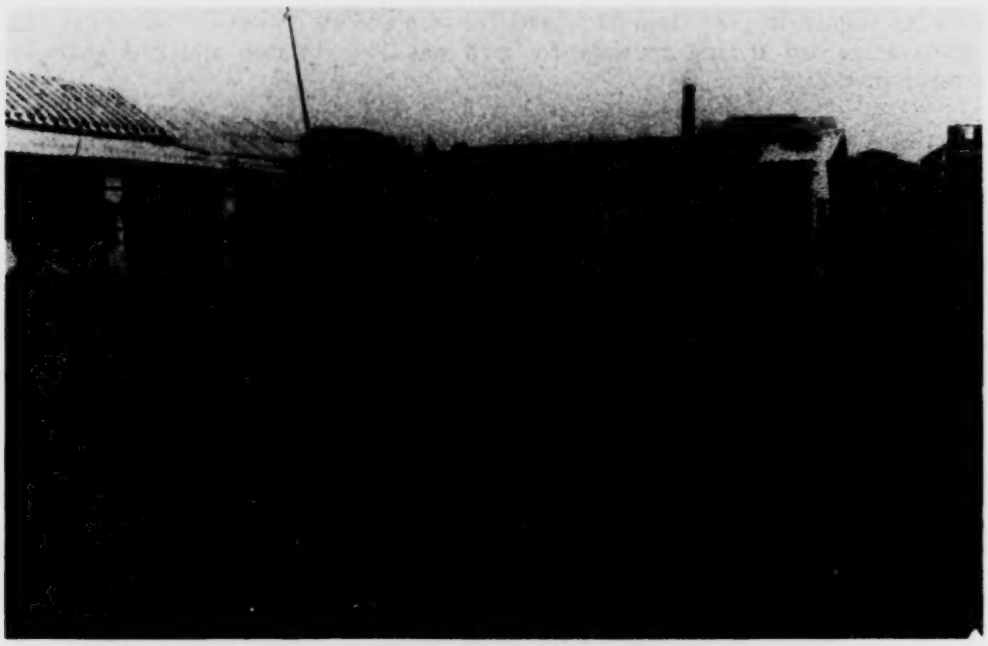
It is very difficult to realise substantial equality between men and women in several aspects of social life unless the issue of compensation of human reproduction has proper solution. Education is one aspect of social life. However, both males and females should at least be given equal opportunity for enrolment or employment. One purpose of taking part in social consultation activities is to

persuade and urge the government at all levels to reflect on the importance of women's education in relevant regulations and documents and advocate the practice of sharing responsibilities of family chores among males and females. In this process, special attention should be paid to the enrolment of female students, especially those who live in the remote and ethnic regions thus avoiding the vicious cycle of women's education caused by the emergence of new illiterates.

To strengthen the work of theoretical studies on women's education and to promote exchanges of such work among scholars at home and abroad.

Women's education is facing many new issues in the process of reform. There is very little theoretical and empirical study on women's education. In view of this fact, the research work on women's education should be urgently put on the agenda. The government educational agencies should give priority to such research and help identify research subjects and disseminate findings of the research. In addition, the government should also give emphasis to the exchange of information on women's education with other countries so as to guarantee the smooth development of women's education in China.

"The quality of women is an indication of societal civilisation, it is also a reflection of the flourishing or decline of a society, a country or a political organisation". Therefore, the destiny of women's liberation in China, the country's flourish and the success of reform depend very much on the development of women's education in China. It is hoped that in the process of reform and opening up to the outside world, women's education in China will take off and have a sound basis for development.



NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN IN KOREA

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Introduction

The Republic of Korea lies on the southern part of the Korean Peninsular which is located between China and Japan extending south-easterly from the continent. Korea is roughly 622 miles long and 134 miles wide at its narrowest point. About 20 per cent of the land is flat and arable leaving the rest of it mountainous. The peninsular is separated from China in the northwest by the Yalu River, from the Soviet Union in the northeast by the Tumen River, and from Japan by the East Sea.

The total population of the Republic of Korea as of July 1st in 1985 was 41,209,000 consisting of 20,410,000 females and 20,798,000 males.Age composition of the population shows 32.3 per cent belong to the 0-14 years age group, 63.8 per cent belong to the 15-64 age group, and 4.0 per cent are 65 years or more.The population distribution by residence in 1983 shows 62.9 per cent in urban and 37.1 per cent in rural areas with the prediction that it will be changed to 71.9 per cent of urban residents in 1990.

The natural growth rate of the population declined 0.94 per cent in 1987 from 1.02 per cent in 1985. The total fertility rate was 1.6 - 1.7 persons in 1985-87 far lower than the replacement level. The life expectancy at birth rose to 63.6 for men and 70.8 for women in 1985 from 62.7 years for men and 69.1 years for women in 1980. The average age at first marriage for men was 28.3 for men and 25.1 years for women in 1985.

Marriages arranged by go-betweens tended to decline from 58.9 per cent in 1982 to about 50 per cent in 1987, while free marriages rose from 35.8 per cent to 43.7 in the same period of time. Koreans are not inclined to get divorced, however the number of cases are increasing. In 1987 there were 45,000 divorces out of 398,000 marriages showing an 11.3 per cent divorce rate. The main factor causing divorce was trouble between husband and wife (81.4 per cent), followed by disputes with other family members (3.2 per cent).

General Status of Women in Korea

In traditional Korean society discrimination between the sexes in favour of males based on feudal Confucianism, dominated all aspects of women's lives. Women of the ruling class led lives suppressed and controlled by men, although their material life might be comfortable and luxurious depending on the rank and status of their husbands. Women of the lower classes, however, lived under the domination of

their male counterpart while sharing together the burdens and hardships of life with their husbands.

Despite the adverse conditions imposed on women in traditional Korean society, there are records of women who distinguished themselves in literature, arts, scholarship, and household management. Those women provided positive examples that women could accomplish as much as men. They helped change the traditional idea that women were inferior to men and so laid a basis for a series of efforts to develop women's capabilities.

Since the establishment of the Republic of Korea with a western democratic constitution in 1948, women's social participation began in earnest. The Republic of Korea Constitution made it clear that men and women are equally entitled to receive education, to hold jobs, and to participate in society.

A series of governmental economic development plans in the early 1960s and the nationwide Saemaul Undong so called new willed movement from the early 1970s have helped Korean society rapidly grow into an industrialised country. As a result, women's participation in social and economic activities has increased steadily. The percentage of women's participation in economic activities grew to 41.6 per cent in 1983 from 38.0 per cent in 1970. The majority of employed women, comprising 46.9 per cent, were in the service sector, while 30.1 per cent were in agriculture and fishing sector. In accordance with the structural changes of industries women employees tend to move to the secondary and tertiary industries from primary industry. Other features of women's employment pattern over the past 10 years have been the increase in married women's participation as well as challenging for entry to higher and professional positions which had been traditionally reserved for men.

Education for Women

The great zeal for education by the Korean people has played a key role in the individual growth as well as in national development. In general, the Korean parents would sacrifice anything for the education of their children. Thus Korea has put much emphasis on the development of education. However, it was only after the latter part of the 19th century that modern education was introduced in Korea.

Since 1948 when the government of the Republic of Korea was formed, Korean education ushered in a new era for democratic education and with the promulgation of Education Law in 1949, democratic concepts and methods were adopted in all aspects of Korean education. The implementation of free and compulsory education at the primary school level was made in the early 1950s, while at the junior/middle school level was made in the early 1980s.

The current system of school education in Korea was organised in accordance with the 6-3-3-4 pattern, that is six years of primary school education, three years of junior/middle high school, three years of senior high school, and four years of college and/or university. The successful implementation of a series of five-year

economic development plans had brought about a fundamental change in the economic and social context and created supportive conditions for the normal operation of nation's education.

Various indices of education show tremendous changes in the quantity as well as quality of Korean education during the past 10 to 20 years. For instance, the per cent of girls finishing primary school and enroled in junior high school was 35.8 in 1983 although differences between girls and boys still exist. Women in their forties and above, women in rural areas and in urban low income areas, and some working women in low positions tend to show that they have been underprivileged in terms of formal education. Nowadays, they are the most important target groups of the non-formal education for women.

Non-formal Education for Women

Non-formal education for women in Korea can be considered as part of a lifelong education which is intended to be compensatory for formal education. It should be the alternative form of education which can be of help to women hoping to acquire occupational or technical skills, and engage in some activities to help them adjust physically as well as psychologically in a rapidly changing society. In addition to this, liberal education to cultivate and improve ones potentiality must not be neglected.

Historically non-formal education in Korea has been conducted in urban areas for well-off women who act as leaders or voluntary workers' role in society. However, since the implementation of the Saemaul Undong, the non-formal educational activities for women have been expanded to the rural areas as well as low income working classes. In general, non-formal education has been vigorously conducted since the promulgation of Non-formal Education Law in 1982.

Agencies or administrative organisations responsive to the non-formal education for women can be enumerated as shown in the following diagram:

Agencies in Charge of NFE for Women

Ministry of Education

Bureau of NFE
Board of Education
Korean Association of Adult Education
Korean Education Development Institute
Private Institutes
Schools and Universities
Museums
Libraries

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Bureau of Family Welfare
Korean Women Development Institute
Health Centers Network
Korean Institute for Population and Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea
Women's Organisations
House of Children & Elderly

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Rural Development Administration
Agricultural Cooperatives
Food & Nutrition Institute

Other Ministries

Saemaul Women's Associations
Consumer Protection Federation
Labor Unions
Mass Communication
Culture Centres
Religious Organisations
Saemaul Training Institutes

Various agencies are conducting nonformal education programs for women. They can be classified into various types according to their nature and status. However, the following classifications are being made in accordance with their program contents which have been grouped into 1) leisure and/or liberal education; 2) occupational and/or technical training; and 3) quasi-schooling and/or compensatory education.

Agencies conducting leisure/liberal education are as follows:

Women's Organisations (60 organisations)
Women's Welfare Centres (11 Centres)
Religious Centre for NFE
Culture Centres
University attached life-long education centres
Mass communication centres
Private institutes
Museum, library, art gallery etc
Saemaul Women's Associations (around 72,000 clubs)
Mothers' classes at various levels of school

Agencies conducted occupational and/or technical training

Women's Organisations
Women's Welfare Centres

Mass Communication established Culture Centres
Private Institutes
Public Vocational Training Centres
Inplant vocational training Centres
Authorized Vocational Training Centres

Agencies conducted quasi-schooling education

Civic Schools
Civic high schools
Technical Schools
Technical/Trade high schools
Industry attached Schools
Evening Special classes
Air and correspondence High Schools
Korea Air and Correspondence University
Open Universities

With regard to nonformal education for Korean women, a needs assessment study was made by the Korean Womens Development Institute through literature reviews and a sample survey interviewing 2,228 women in 1987. The findings of this study revealed that the participator of current nonformal education programs for women tend to be urban residents, young (aged between 20-40), having a relatively high level of education (college educatior or at least high school education backgrounds), working, and from higher income families. Since the above characteristics are positively correlated with their rate of participation in nonformal education, those who have been deprived in formal education logically were again underprivileged in terms of nonformal education.

Problems and tasks

Even if the general status of Korean nonformal education for women thus far has been in active stages, there are problems to be solved in the near future. Some of them are 1) motivating and mobilizing women who have never been exposed to any nonformal education programs 2) providing opportunities for and reducing barriers to the nonformal education for women 3) reducing costs and expenditure to enable women to receive nonformal education 4) full utilization of human resources as well as other instructional materials; and 5) increasing demand for formal acknowledgement of the results of nonformal education, etc.

The problems stated above are too brief to be understood, however the general directions of Korean nonformal education for women must put more emphasis on lessening the gap between those who are privileged and those who are deprived in terms of nonformal education, and on the new era of education which encompasses tremendous technological and vocational changes.

Strategies can be enumerated to tackle these problems. Feasible effective and efficient methods, compatible with existing values and attitudes must be thought about. In that regard, the following strategies are proposed:

Strategy 1: A tour group approach. The educational observation tour method is not an innovative one for formal as well as nonformal education, however not much thought has been given as to how it can be utilized as one of the strategic approaches to nonformal education. In Korea it is quite a common practice even among poor or older people, to save some money in order to join a tour once a year or at least once a lifetime. Most of the tours will turn out to be group tours guided by the travel agencies. It would not be difficult therefore to contact these people. Nonformal education through this approach will include visiting and observing, question and answer sessions and some practical exercises and trials.

A Chinese proverb says that one seeing is worth a hundred hearing. Now other proverbs say that one doing is worth a hundred seeing, and furthermore, one believing is worth one hundred doing.

Strategy 2: TV and VTR approach. This approach is a developed form of audiovisual instructional methods. Nowadays, television's role in every corner of life is far beyond human understanding. It has the magnificent power and ability to reach all kinds of people as far as TV sets are installed. A country like Korea where almost every household has at least one TV set, the influence of TV can never be overlooked. Therefore, educational messages could be sent through this channel if the people involved in TV communication from the top to the grassroots level are well aware of it and are will to be educative. This cannot be easily anticipated but fully fledged efforts must be made for the utilization of TV in the nonformal education of men and women. The VTR can be used for different purposes and TV and VTR can be used in a complementary way as well. The VTR may well supplement the weak points that TV cannot accomplish due to its very nature. Any forms of TV program can be utilized for the purpose of education even including cartoons and TV commercials.

Strategy 3: Group dynamics including role playing, games, workshops etc. Nonformal education can be operated through individual learning processes. People can also learn effectively through group procedures. They can help, stimulate and provide good company for each other. Learning can be facilitated by other companions in addition to the instructor's teaching and makes understanding easier. Learning by working and/or by doing through active participation in these procedures can bring about more concrete results.

WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE

Lim Bee Lum

In the last 2 decades, especially in the 1980s with rapid industrialisation and restructuring of her industrial economy, Singapore women are looked upon as an immediate available source of potential labour. In this paper, we shall discuss the role that Singapore women play in national development and the role and functions of Adult/Non-Formal Education in the training and retraining of the women's labour force.

Introduction

Singapore, situated 1 degree north of the equator, is an island-state of 621.7 sq km. It has no natural resources except its people and women constitute 50% of its total population of 2.6 million people.

The ethnic composition of the population is a multi-racial one. The three predominant races, however, are namely: Chinese forming 77%, Malays 15% and Indians 6%. The Eurasians and other minority communities make up the remaining 2%. Except for the Malays, the other races were of migrant origin whose ancestors came to Singapore to trade and make their home. Besides establishing their roots in Singapore, these migrants also brought with them their cultural values and traditions of the native lands.

Status of Women

Women in these ethnic communities were accorded an inferior and subordinate position and they were relegated to look after the home and family. They were economically dependent on their men as providers and protectors.

With the introduction of education and legal reforms and accelerated by the rapid economic changes over the last twenty years, their traditional roles and values have changed with time. They are now increasingly being recognised as men's equal partner in society and have the freedom to pursue an education, to seek employment and interests outside their sheltered homes.

The reforms and genuine efforts to enable Singapore women to develop their potentialities are reflected in its educational policies and legal-socio legislation. An example is in the field of education where the Government does not show any difference in education between the sexes. Girls are given the opportunity to enjoy primary, secondary and tertiary education like boys.

More important and significant was the passing of the Women's Charter Act in 1961. This legislation is aimed at safeguarding women's rights and marriages. It provides for monogamous marriages, the solemnisation and registration of such

marriages. It allows husband and wife equal rights to property ownership and equal rights to social and economic participation. All these mean that women are now recognised as individuals with rights and to a large extent enjoy equal treatment as men.

Female Participation in the Labour Force

The term labour force is defined as the number of people who are either working or looking for work. These people are regarded as "economically active". For those people who do not work and do not want to work, they are categorised as "economically inactive". Hence the proportion of the population which is economically active is known as the labour force.

The 1979 labour force statistics indicated that the female labour force numbered around 357,000 persons. This amounted to a labour force participation rate of 42%. However, by June 1987, the number of females in the workforce had increased to 472,800 persons, this raised the female labour participation rate to 47%. The cause for the rising female labour participation rate is due to Government efforts in attracting women to the workforce.

As indicated in the 1987 statistics, the highest labour force participation among women, in terms of age, was in the age group of the 20-29 years old. Between the ages of 20-29, however, the percentage decreased sharply. From 39 years old onwards, the number of women in the labour market continued to decline. Table 3 shows marked contrast in the female participation rates between the single and ever-married women. The participation rate of the former was almost double that of the latter category of women workers. Between 83% to 94% of single women in the 20-44 years age groups were in the labour force compared to only 43% to 58% of ever-married women in the same age group. Among the ever-married women, the pool of potential workers which the labour market could tap from is sizeable.

As for those females who are economically inactive, based on the 1987 statistics there are 534230 females over the age of 15 who do not work and are not interested to look for work. This group forms 41% of the total female population.

It is from this group of women that the Government is for yet another source of labour supply. Greater effort and more attractive incentives are being taken by the Government to induce these women to join or re-enter the labour scene.

One strategy to address this labour shortage is to publicise and make known to these women job opportunities around them through organised forums, workshops, seminars and even training courses. Both the Government bodies and the non-government organisations have been very active in this aspect.

One such program which the Singapore Association for Continuing Education and the Extra-mural Studies Department of the National University of Singapore organised is a series of weekend workshops for women on self and work career development. Its aim is to mobilise the untapped female labour supply into the

labour force. The objectives are to enable participants to acquire some basic skills in interpersonal relationship, assertiveness, time management and job hunting.

Educational Status of Women

In the Census of Population 1980, it was reported that 50% more females than males had no qualifications. The 1987 Labour Force Survey also reiterated a similar finding, 46.5% of the economically active females have only primary education or no education at all.

Of the 534000 economically inactive women 71% were over 30 years of age. Over 61% of these old non-working females have either no qualifications or only primary education. They are very unlikely to share the same aspirations as the younger women with secondary or tertiary education. It is this category of females that efforts are being targeted to equip them with essential skills and basic education. It is in this area that adult/non-formal education can play an important role.

Education is an important factor in improving the marketability of these women. In view of the government's policy to develop Singapore into a regional centre for high-technology and financial business, women are needed to enter and in some cases to re-enter the labour market to ease the shortage of labour.

To enable and encourage these women with little or no education to come forward to meet the labour demand, efforts are being made to educate them and equip them with basic skills for the workforce. As for those women who are already working and have no education, efforts are being directed to upgrade their skills through training and education since the majority of them are unskilled or semi-skilled workers who had also missed the opportunity for basic education. In this aspect of providing a basic education and skill training and upgrading, Adult/Non-Formal Education has an important role to play.

Adult Non-Formal Education in Singapore

Adult/Non-Formal education has a complementary role to play in the education system of Singapore. Continuing Education and Training (CET), a term used synonymously with adult education, being where the individual has left the formal school system. In CET, the emphasis is on imparting a set of values and skills that will enable an individual to function productively at his/her workplace. In recent years, the focus of CET Programs is aimed at those who have missed formal education in their day schools. Most of the CET courses are short-term and specific to the needs of the learners.

Adult/Non-Formal education consists of 2 aspects, viz:

> Basic education in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills, that is, English Language and Mathematics.

Skills training development, that is, further vocational training and retraining.

The main providers of non-formal education can be categorised as follows:-

Government and semi-government bodies such as the Economic Development Board (EDB), the National Productively Board (NPB), the National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Polytechnic (SP) Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NAP) and the Vocational and Industrial Training Board (VITB).

Private institutions such as the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS), the Marketing Institute of Management (SIM).

Associations such as the Singapore Council of Women's Organisation (SCWO), the Singapore Retail Merchants Association (SRMA), the Singapore Association for Continuing Education (SACE), the Singapore Manufacturing Association (SMA) and the Singapore Hotel Association Training and Educational Centre (SHATEC).

It was mentioned earlier that the percentage of women who did not have a basic education numbered 50% more than the males. What then are the measures that have been taken to ensure that they make a meaningful contribution to the Singapore economy?

The Government recognises that it has to depend heavily on female labour to support the labour intensive electronic, garment, textile and retail industries. It has initiated a series of training and retraining programs for women to meet the demands of these industries.

Some of the programs include:

Basic Education for Skills Training (BEST)

Modular Skills Training (MOST)

Worker Improvement through Secondary Education (WISE)

Core Skills for Effectiveness and Change (COSEC).

The first three programs are organised by the VITB and the latter by the NPB.

Basic Education for Skills Training

At present, the BEST Program is the most comprehensive adult education program available. It was launched in 1983 in answer to the low level of literacy among workers in Singapore.

The Program hopes to reach out to 322,000 workers who did not complete their Primary education as well as those who received their secondary education in the non-English streams. The objective of BEST is to provide these workers with the basic literacy and numeracy skills up to a level comparable with the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE).

Under the BEST Program, the two subjects offered are English Language and Mathematics. Each of these subjects may be taken together or one at a time. Each subject comprises 4 modules and is conducted over 240 hours (60 hours for each module). It will take a worker two years to complete each course. A Certificate of Basic Education is awarded to every successful candidate at the end-of-the-module examination.

BEST classes are run by companies as in-house programs for their employees and conducted by the Ministry of Defence (Mindef) for the national servicemen and by the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and the Vocational & Industrial Training Board (VITB) for the general public. The network of centres are located within close proximity to the companies or homes of the workers.

In its efforts to promote the Program, the Government gives generous incentives to companies that are conducting BEST classes within its premises. The financial support in the form of capital, video and training grants comes from the Skills Development Fund (SDF), which is the financial arm of the National Productivity Board.

Upon completion of the Program (Module 4), the worker would already have acquired the necessary skills to pursue other upgrading courses such as the MOST and WISE courses offered by the VITB.

Modular Skills Training (MOST)

The MOST program is available to holders of BEST or PSLE qualifications. Its entry requirement which requires only a pass in one subject at BEST or PSLE level, is a boon to workers who wish to acquire basic technical skills. There are 16 courses under MOST catering to the needs of a technologically changing society. MOST has a modular course structure. There are 4 modules in each course which leads to the National Trade Certificate 3 (NTC-3).

Worker Improvement through Secondary Education (WISE)

WISE Program is yet another opportunity for BEST women graduates to upgrade themselves academically. It was launched in September 1987, for workers who have acquired a basic education under BEST but would not like to upgrade themselves to the GCE "N" level. The GCE "N" level system was introduced in 1980 for the slower learners to attain the GCE "O" level in 5 years instead of the normal 4.

To date, a number of organisations have organised COSEC courses for their employees. More than 10,000 workers have gone through COSEC since its inception.

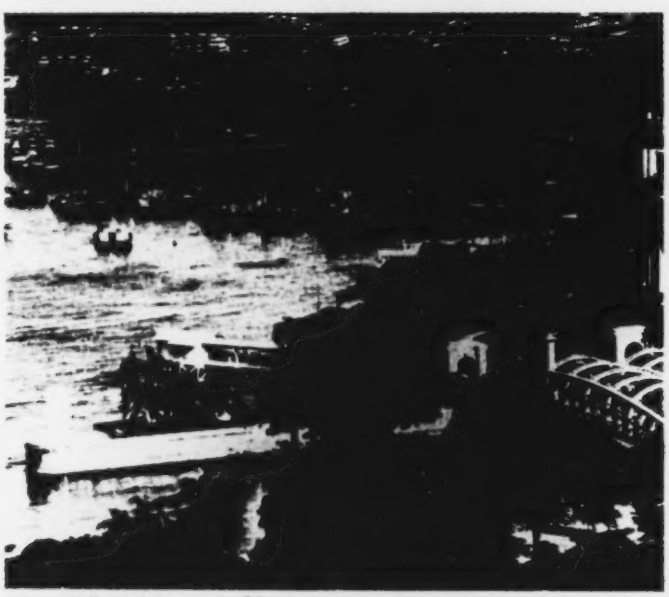
Extent of Women's Participation in these Programs

Overall, the BEST Program has been quite a success. The Program will be moving into its sixth year in 1988 and is still receiving strong support from the employers. To date, more than 90,000 workers have participated in at least one module of BEST. Notably, women's participation in the program has been particularly significant. Of the 90,000 workers, 47,000 or 52% who enrolled for BEST were women. Another 6500 (43%) women out of 15,000 workers have completed BEST Module 4.

The enrolment statistics also show that there is a higher percentage (53%) of the women enrolling in the WISE Program.

MOST courses, on the other hand, do not seem to be popular with women, probably due to their technical nature. However, there is still a small percentage who found MOST courses related to their work area. The courses that have attracted good response from the women are the dress making, hairdressing and men's tailoring courses.

The above figures showed that women have been quick to seize the opportunity to upgrade themselves through tailoring courses. Some were self-motivated and others were given encouragement by their employers, unions and peer groups to enrol for CET courses. Companies have given their fair share of support to BEST. More than 400 companies have conducted BEST classes for their employees and among these, 50% are from the electrical/electronic, textiles, wholesale and retail sectors where the workforce is predominantly female.



The Clifford Pier area of Singapore

Skills Development Fund

All these programs were made possible with the support of the Skills Development Fund (SDF) which was set up in 1979. Since 1981, the SDF has disbursed some $30 million a year. In its training grant scheme, financial incentives are given to employers to establish training centres to upgrade skills of their workers. The grant covers a scale from 30% to 90% of allowable costs. The level of financial support will depend on the quality of the Program and its cost effectiveness.

On another level, employers who sponsor their employees for training are given a form of support under the "Approved-in-Principle" (AIP) scheme. There are 2 levels of support, at 50% and 70% of the course fees. The AIP scheme allows employers to get back that percentage of the sum that has been invested in training.

In the case of full-time apprenticeship program, employers will receive a flat grant of $2 per trainee hour. The COSEC Program is supported at $3 per trainee hour whilst BEST and WISE courses receive full subsidy from the SDF.

Incentives for the Working Women

Attractive incentives are provided to attract more women into the labour market. The Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) has formed a working group to look into how private companies and forms can be more sympathetic towards women workers. Measures so far taken are the granting of unpaid leave, flexible working schedules for working mothers.

The NTUC has also formed a Women's Committee to promote the interest and status of women in the workforce and to develop more female labour leaders.

Child Care Centres

The Government has also looked into the needs of working mothers by providing child care centres. The child care centre program is administered by the Ministry of Community Development and run by the People's Association, National Trades Union Congress, employers, voluntary welfare organisations and private operators. In March 1988 there are 122 child care centres conveniently located in the void decks of Housing Development Board estates.

The child care centres program had incurred $2.39 million for the first six months of the fiscal year (FY 87/88). For the whole FY 87/88 the Government had a budget of $4 million to spend on child care centres.

In April 1987, the government also introduced a new subsidy scheme to make child care centres more available to working parents. Parents need to pay only $100 for full day care and $50 for half-day care every month.

Leave Schemes

Employers have been encouraged to set up creches within company premises for their female employees and adopt a system of flexible working hours, and also extending the period of maternity leave. In the civil service, a married female officer is eligible for full-pay maternity leave of 4 weeks immediately before and 4 weeks immediately after, she gives birth, if she is certified unfit. This generous maternity leave allows sufficient time for women to recover from childbirth and re-enter the workforce with ease.

For those married women who are better educated and qualified, the Government provided even more attractive incentives such as a female officer may be granted no-pay leave for child care for 1 year at a time up to a maximum of 4 years. Such leave must be taken within 4 years after the birth of the officer's child. This incentive allows working mothers more time to look after their new born.

An arrangement for the part time employment of permanent female officers may be made if they have children below 6 years of age. This incentive helps those mothers who need time off to look after their infants, but who feel that they can still handle a part time job.

Full-pay unrecorded leave may also be granted to female officers to enable them to look after their sick children. The children must, however, be under 6 years old. Such unrecorded leave is limited to 5 days for each child under 6 years, subject to a maximum of 15 days per year.

Tax incentives

To further encourage the more qualified and experienced to participate and remain in the workforce, the Government has introduced a collection of tax incentives, namely:-

> A married woman living with her husband may elect for a separate tax assessment of her income and her investment income if the investment income is attributable to assets and investments acquired by her from her earned income. This helps reduce the tax burden on the otherwise joint assessment of the combined wages of both husband and wife. A woman thus qualifies for separate tax assessment.
>
> A married woman may deduct from her taxable income, relief for her unmarried child or children, if the child maintained by her is under 16 years of age at any time during the preceding year. If the child is over 16 years old tax relief will be given only if the child is receiving full time instruction at any university, college, school or other educational establishment, or is serving under articles or indentures during that year. The maximum number of children that may be considered for tax relief and the amount of relief, depends on when the woman gave birth to her children. For example, if the woman has less than four children, on or after 1 August 1973, a

deduction of $750 for each child is granted for a maximum of three children.

Conclusion

This paper has dealt with the various training opportunities and incentives for working women and mothers and the efforts focused on how to increase the awareness of women towards improving themselves as vital members of the National Work Force. As long as there is a need to upgrade the skill of the workforce, there will always be a place for adult/non-formal education in Singapore.

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WOMEN IN SRI LANKA: CURRENT STATUS AND ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS IN EDUCATION

Chandra Gunawardena

Introduction

The status of women in ancient Sri Lanka before the advent of the Westerner was strongly influenced by the two major religions that shaped social relations at the time. The subordinate status accorded to women in Hindu society underwent considerable change under the Buddhist tradition. The Buddha bestowed equality of status on women when they were permitted to enter the order of Buddhist nuns. It is pointed out that especially a mother enjoys unrivalled respect in the home, referred to in common parlance as "The Buddha in the home". Yet side by side with such recognition, indications of 'dependency' occur widely. Especially in decision-making whether it be with regard to the selection of a partner of life, exercise of independence or the choice of a career, the arena within which a woman was permitted to perform was veritably a restrictive one.

The arrival of the Europeans marked a significant change in status for Sri Lankan women. In 1931, the British recognised equal political status between sexes, when all persons over 21 years of age, irrespective of sex, were made eligible to vote. The same policy was followed in education, to which access was provided to all children without any discrimination by sex.

Introduction of free education in 1945 meant that parents did not need to give preference for education of sons to that of daughters due to financial reasons. As a result, a near parity in educational opportunity for boys and girls has been realised. The 1981 literacy rate of 85.4 per cent for the total population included rates of 89.9 per cent for men and 82.4 per cent for women (Table 1). Table 1 points out that the discrepancy between male and female rates is due to a larger percentage of women than men in the older age ranges who are illiterate.

The educational policy which did not discriminate in favour of the male sex has borne fruit in tangible terms. Thus at present, it is seen that the educational system retains a higher per cent of girls than boys in the higher grades (Table 2 and 3). A common primary junior secondary curriculum is offered to both sexes. Yet examination of data relating to course enrolment reveals that in spite of the opportunity that is available, disparities do exist by sex in different courses of study especially at the tertiary level. In higher education thus, in the traditionally male-dominated professions of Engineering and Technical Studies, female enrolment is still low (Tables 4, 5 and 6).

In spite of the above-described general level of education, concentrations of uneducated women are found in specific pockets of deprivation in lower socio-economic groups and disadvantaged geographical locations (e.g. Table 6). The patterns of sex-wise employment also do not reflect the relative equity in access to

education (Tables 7 and 8). Moreover, the majority of Sri Lankan women are seen to be confined to the lower levels of the employment structure. Over 70 per cent of women workers are found in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in the organised and informal sectors of the economy. Except in the estate sector, employment prospects of women appear to be bleaker than that of men. Even in the case of working women, economic benefits which accrue to them are meagre. Among the contributory factors for such a situation are the relative lack of marketable skills, relative lack of mobility, domestic responsibilities, and 'role conflicts' which they undergo and which stem from the complex mix of traditional concepts, liberal ideas and economic realities that they face.

Table I
Literacy rates in Sri Lanka

Age Group	1981		
	Male	Female	Total
10-14	88.8	88.8	88.8
15-19	89.9	89.4	89.7
20-24	92.5	90.1	91.3
25-29	93.6	90.0	91.8
30-34	94.0	87.8	91.0
35-39	93.1	82.5	87.8
40-44	91.8	77.4	84.9
45-49	89.2	69.6	79.5
50-54	89.4	68.7	79.5
55-59	87.7	64.7	76.8
60-64	86.4	61.7	75.0
65-69	83.4	57.9	71.3
70-74	82.0	53.3	68.8
75 over	77.4	48.4	63.4
15 + Pop	90.8	81.2	86.1
10 + Pop	90.5	82.8	86.5

Source: Census of Sri Lanka 1981

Table 2
Educational Attainment of the Population
(Aged 10 years and above.)

Level	1963		1971		1981	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
No Schooling	15.7	33.8	16.0	29.5	8.7	17.5
Incomplete Primary Education	33.9	28.2	26.9	22.7	13.6	11.4
Secondary Educ.	42.5	31.6	50.7	42.4	68.2	62.3
G.C.E. (O.L.)	6.5	5.5	4.5	4.5	7.0	7.0
G.C.E. (A.L.)	1.4	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.4	1.4
University & Higher Degree			0.6	0.1	0.9	0.5

Source: Census of Population, Sri Lanka, 1963, 1971, 1981.

Table 3
General Education
(Participation Rates - Urban, Rural, 1981)

Age	Total			Urban			Rural		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	84.4	84.5	84.2	86.6	86.4	86.9	83.8	84.1	83.6
10-11	82.4	82.9	81.8	85.2	86.4	84.4	81.6	82.1	81.1
5-14	83.7	83.7	83.6	85.9	86.4	85.6	82.7	83.1	82.4
15-19	41.9	41.2	42.7	46.4	44.9	48.0	40.6	40.0	41.3
19-24	8.9	8.7	9.0	9.7	9.4	10.2	8.7	9.1	8.7
5-24	55.8	56.0	55.6	56.6	55.3	57.3	55.7	56.3	55.1

Source: Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka.

Table 4
Female Undergraduate Entrants classified according to Academic Stream, and Sex
1986/87

Academic Stream Female	Male	Female	Total	%
Arts	3091	3263	6354	51.4
Commerce	2104	1703	3807	44.7
Law	294	277	571	48.5
Phys.Science/Bio Science	1949	1513	3462	43.7
Medicine	1390	1023	2413	42.4
Dental Surgery	155	129	284	45.4
Veterinary Science	100	59	159	37.1
Agriculture	559	291	850	34.2
Engineering	1664	250	1914	40.8
Architecture	90	62	152	40.8
Total	11390	8576	19966	41.9

Table 5
Enrolment of the Open University
According to Course of Study and Sex - 1986/87

Course of Study	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Certificate				
Entrepreneurship	66	11	77	14.3
Pre-School Education	02	374	376	99.5
Professional English	956	1011	1967	51.4
Diploma				
Technology	1177	176	1353	13.0
Degree				
B.Sc (Science)	371	326	697	46.8
B.Sc (Engineering)	12	02	14	14.3
Bachelor of Law	510	143	653	21.9
Postgraduate				
Diploma in Education	721	1610	2331	69.1
M.Phil	01	01	02	50.0
Total	3815	3654	7469	48.98

Source: Statistical Handbook, University Grants Commission, 1987

Table 6
Literacy Rates by Ethnic Group - 1981

Ethnic Group	Male	Female	Total
Sinhala	91.8	84.9	88.4
Sri Lanka Tamil	89.4	84.5	86.6
Indian Tamil	78.6	55.1	66.9
Sri Lanka Moor	86.7	71.5	79.3
Malay	93.2	88.9	91.1
Burglar	98.2	96.1	97.1
Others	91.2	79.8	86.1
Total	91.5	82.4	86.5

Source Census of Sri Lanka, 1981.

Table 7
Economic Activity Rate by Sector

Sector		1978/79	1981/82
Urban	Male	48.2	49.5
	Female	21.3	16.9
	Total	34.2	32.6
Rural	Male	50.2	49.3
	Female	24.1	17.1
	Total	53.7	53.9
Estate	Male	54.6	54.5
	Female	53.7	53.4
	Total	53.7	53.9
TOTAL	Male	50.1	49.7
	Female	25.9	19.4
	Total	37.7	34.3

Source: Consumer Finances and Socio-economic Survey, 1987/79 and 1981/82 Central Bank, Colombo.

Table 8
Unemployment in Sri Lanka

Year	Male	Female	Total
1963	8.9	7.6	7.3
1969/70	11.4	21.2	13.9
1971	14.3	19.6	15.6
1972	18.9	36.3	24.0
1973	13.7	26.8	17.4
1975	14.3	32.9	19.9
1978/79	9.2	24.9	14.7
1989/81	12.4	23.0	15.8
1981	13.2	31.8	17.78
1981/82	7.8	21.3	11.7

Reproduced from Jayaweera, Swarna (1985),
"Women in Sri Lanka : A Situational Analysis", Colombo. CENWOR.

Moreover, statistics often exclude a substantial proportion of women workers who are engaged in the unorganised sector of the economy and home-based activities. This category of women workers who are economically active, but whose contribution to production remains unaccounted are heavily concentrated at the lower socio-economic level. On the whole, the higher incidence of unemployment among women reflects the marginality of women in the economic structure.

The majority of women workers of Sri Lanka are shown to perform physically exhausting tasks that require little or no education and skills, for less monetary rewards than their male counterparts. A minority have reached the upper rungs but are largely excluded from decision-making in the way to economic power and status. Shah's (1986) observation that 'the main constraint on women is their mental conditioning' appears as particularly relevant to the Sri Lankan situation.

Non-formal education is accepted as a strategy which is most effective in improving the knowledge, attitudes and skills of women in disadvantaged situations. These programs attempt to provide women with:

the skills and knowledge that would make the execution of women's current reproductive tasks less demanding and more efficient;

marketable skills that would enable them to enter the market economy through the production and sale of goods; and

emancipation, to help them break out of their psychological prisons and enable them to develop new attitudes and self-confidence.

A variety of non-formal education programs are being planned and implemented by several government and non-governmental organisations, for women with an incomplete education. According to content, they can be categorised under programs on:

literacy
home management
family health, nutrition and community education
skills development, and
vocational training.

Prominent among the governmental organisations engaged in non-formal education are the Ministries of Education, Labour, Health, Rural Development, Women's Affairs (*under which the Women's Bureau functions), Agriculture and Plant Implementation, and governmental corporations such as the Mahaweli Development Authority and National Youth Services Council. Notable among the non-governmental organisations are Sarvodaya, Young Women's Christian Association and Lanka Mahila Samithi.

The Women's Bureau, established in 1978 was intended to be a focal point for women's development and related issues and to operate as a co-ordinating agency. Over the last eight years, the Bureau has been successful in projecting the 'image' of women as important partners in national development and in raising the consciousness of women and improving their self-image through workshops and media programs. It has implemented training and self-employment programs in 22 out of the 24 districts in the country and in specific target areas - the estate sector, the new Mahaweli settlements, fishing villages and low-income areas in Colombo. Most of these programs have been in agriculture, animal husbandry and food preparation for the predominantly rural base of the population, while in a few urban areas, women have been trained in such areas as book-binding and masonry.

Non-governmental organisations have also adopted this training model, that is, income-generation-cum-family health information-cum-leadership training. Of these, the Lanka Mahila Samithi, mostly has traditional type projects and training programs for rural women while Sarvodaya organises pre-schools and community shops run by village women. Problems encountered in providing managerial and marketing know-how and quality control have detracted from the effectiveness of these programs.

Professional organisations such as Women Lawyer's Association and the Sri Lanka Federation of University Women have been active in the area of adult education. The latter especially, has carried out research studies and action programs.

A third group among the non-governmental organisations is made up of the small but vociferous feminist groups that have been, to a large extent, responsible for keeping issues of women's exploitation, subordination and oppression before the public eye. The main success of these groups have been in consciousness-raising combating sexist ideology and agitating for the specific demands of working women.

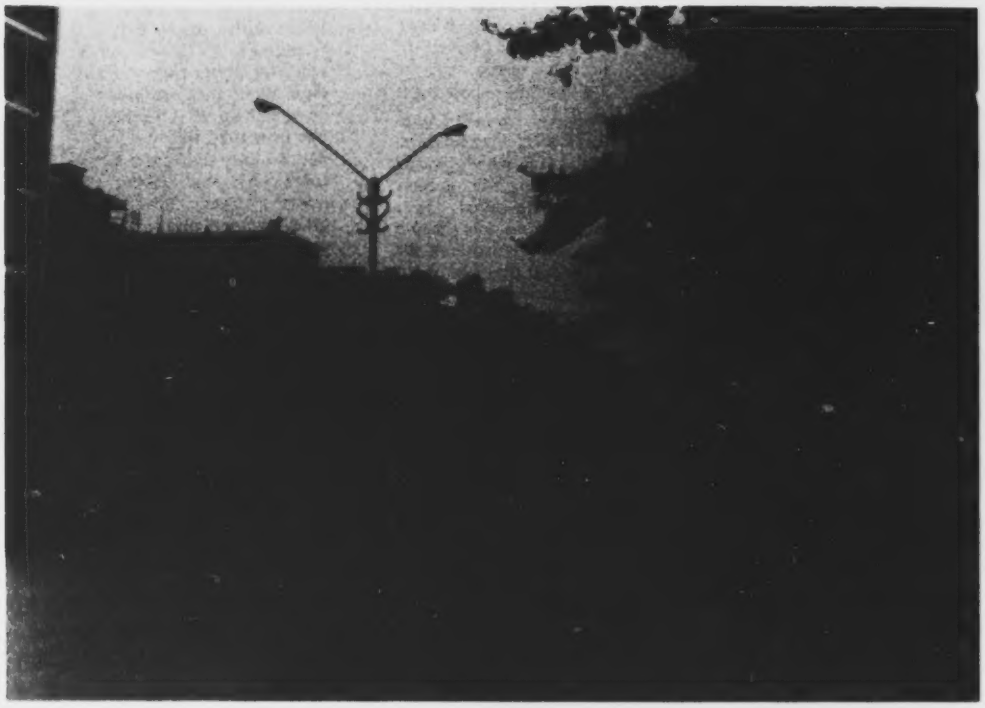
There has also been a recent interest in promoting research among women. The Centre for Women's Research is engaged in conducting research on the major areas of concern to women, and the Women's Education Centre prints pamphlets for women in simple language on a variety of issues covering women's exploitation and oppression.

These programs have contributed in some measure to improving the living conditions of economically disadvantaged women. They have, however, been in the nature of ad hoc programs and are sometimes unrelated to real life situations. Currently, the change agents' program has stimulated experiments with women's groups but it is not clear yet as to whether the groups will respond to external intervention. Most of these programs need to be co-ordinated and to be monitored to avoid duplication and wastage. They would be more effective if they were linked with local, district or even national programs.

Presently, greater emphasis is being laid on use of non-formal participatory techniques of training. It has been demonstrated that these techniques can foster active involvement of participants in thinking, motivating, implementing, evaluating and enjoying the benefits of training for themselves. The participants are guided to gain confidence through doing, by giving experience in solving their own problems, making their own decisions and being active on their own. There is a belief that most successful programs are those where there is grassroots participation of women in identifying their own needs and leading to organise self-help.

A pioneering attempt by the University of Colombo in commencing courses in Community Development has indirectly supported the non-formal educational programs for women by training personnel engaged in community development work. Representatives of women's organisations and of organisations engaged in activities designed to improve the status of women are provided with access to these courses. Graduates from recognised universities are eligible to follow the Post-graduate Diploma in Community Development while the three short-term training courses for community/rural development practitioners are offered to grassroots level workers in the field, engaged in development work. In the Diploma course stress is laid on developing relevant skills. Teaching methodologies have been deliberately designed to concentrate more on androgogical, action-oriented and multidirectional methods. The three short

courses are specifically devoted to project formulation, project implementation and evaluation and androgogical training methodologies. Among the objectives of these courses are those of developing skills in identification, planning, implementation and evaluation of grassroots level development projects to broaden horizons on people's participation and developing skills in using participation methods in involving people in community projects. Enabling the use of appropriate androgogical methodologies in tapping and mobilising grassroots level wisdom and potential for development activities is another important aim. It is believed that the participants of these courses would, after training, be in a stronger position to act as effective facilitators who can help women to uplift themselves through their own effort.



Chandra Gunawardana and Mary Soondrawu (PNG) in Guangzhou

The Great Battle of the sexes

Sri Lankan views

Observer staffer **Ruvini Jayasinghe** spoke to a cross-section of men and women in Sri Lanka to find out what they feel about this reversal of roles.

Mrs. Irene Wanigaratne–husband the oldest child

Most of the people I spoke to agreed that women today are more independent and even more aggressive. They felt that with more and more academically and professionally qualified women seeking employment it is inevitable that they would become more assertive and demand equal rights and opportunities.

But whether they are actually chasing their men-folk out of their homes with their dominant, overpowering behaviour as the feature suggests is entirely different aspect of the emancipation of women.

Mrs. Irene Wanigaratne well known as a teacher of speech and drama who has her own school says'A woman's husband is often her oldest child. They need more looking after and looking into than anyone else in the family.'

Today's carrer woman who goes out to work more out of necessity than anything else simply has no time to do her husband's work for him. He has to realise that and change his pattern of life to ease her work around the house. Women have let themselves be taken for granted for too long a time and finally when the protest begins the men folk find it hard to take-'she said. Clearly her sympathies lie with the women.

Over to Mr.S. Weerasinghe an account executive in a mercantile firm. 'Women who earn more than their husbands could become a threat to a peaceful family life'he says. This fact if often thrown at a man in arguments and it makes things extremely difficult for a man who has enjoyed the position of being the head of the family for generations mainly because he has been the sole breadwinner for so long.

Mrs. Yvonne Gulamhussein well known socialite and leader of fashions agreed that the age of the subservient woman is gone pernaps forever. 'If your husband beats you what's wrong with giving him a blow back?' she asked. On a more serious note she said that this is a battle of the sexes and the idea of the woman wearing the pants around the home is a misconception. There is nothing wrong with women competing with men as long as they do not forget their womanly charm on their feminine side.

'I agree that women sometimes get so aggressive that they chase their men out of the homes' said Mr. Reggie Candappa Chairman and Managing Director of Grants Kenyon and Eckhardt ltd.

He said 'Some men work longer than necessary in their offices while others spend a good deal of their time in bars drinking with their men friends. I know that often when the phone rings in a club these men do not answer them. If someone else does they wave their hands to say they are not there' he said. Some married men idealise other women and pour out their troubles to them, only to find that the same story repeats itself once he finally marries her.'

One example of Mass Media treatment of this issue.

WOMEN IN HONG KONG - ADULT EDUCATION

Amy Wong, Caritas Adult and Higher Education Service

Women in the Hong Kong Context

Hong Kong is a small island south east of China. Hong Kong Island together with the Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories make up a total area of 1,052 sq. kilometres. The population is believed to have reached 6 million in 1988. Being a British Colony and one of the leading commercial and financial centre in the World, it is a place where Eastern cultures mixes with the West. Yet with 98% of the population being Chinese, the Eastern culture has remained prominent for many years in history, and the concept of 'family' is rooted deeply in the minds of the people. In the last 20 years, we have witnessed a tremendous change in the economic activities of Hong Kong, bringing forth a shifting in the labour force component as well as family structure. Women's participation in the labour force has risen greatly and so has their status in society and at home. Before any endeavour is made to explain the recent phenomenon, it is perhaps necessary to scan through the position of women in traditional Chinese society as an introduction.

Traditional Chinese Society

In traditional Chinese society, it was believed you should have big families and reproduce as many children, especially boys, as your financial situation allowed. Men played the dominant figure socially, economically and politically Women's place was basically at home. The patrilineal family structure was instrumental in holding women in their dependent position. Sons could inherit family property , offer ancestral sacrifices, become the breadwinners and certainly have the first if not the sole right for education. As for the females, they were either obedient daughters, sisters or wives whose duty was to perform the necessary domestic work and bear sons to perpetuate the patrilineal family. Education for the female was a very exceptional and unprofitable enterprise for the very well off class. A woman with little knowledge was considered virtuous and hence, there was little motivation to get a girl educated. Their general lack of education opportunities therefore held them in their subservient role for many centuries.

Recent changes

In the last 20 years, Hong Kong has been transformed from a trading centre to a sophisticated producer and marketer of light industrial products. Gradually more and more foreign firms moved into Hong Kong using it as a commercial base in South East Asia and this has recently made Hong Kong an important financial centre in the world's economy. The majority of the population has had their living standard raised in accordance with the rapid economic growth. With 48.58% of the

population being female, women's educational, economic and social position has likewise improved. (According to the 1988 Hong Kong Statistic Report for 1987 Male:2,886,000 Female:2,727,000 Total 5,613,000). Two forces worked in parallel in pushing up the dramatic uplift of women's status ie education opportunities and women's participation in economic activities.

Education is probably the paramount factor in women's improved status. Improvements in school provision over the years have greatly reduced illiteracy among women. In 1931 female illiteracy was widespread when the census reported only 19% of the females population were able to read and write. By 1961 the percentage of literate women climbed to 51.88%. In 1971 the figure was 64.1%. In 1981 it has reached 74.5% and in 1986 78.4% (Hong Kong 1986 By Census).

Since 1980 nine years of free education has been offered to all children - 6 years of primary school and 3 years of junior secondary school . Places are provided in senior secondary schools and further education could be obtained from Teachers Colleges, Technical Institutes, Polytechnics and the Universities. Financial assistance is made available to students in the form of scholarships, maintenance grants and interest free loans. Adult education courses are provided both by the government and voluntary agencies. Women who missed opportunities in their earlier years could easily re-educate themselves through these educational activities.

In respect of the labour market, the total working population in 1986 was 2,753,848, comprising 1,716,411 males and 1,037,437 females. (Hong Kong 1986 B Census). In other words, working females occupy 37.6% of total working population. This has led to female emancipation and gradual transformation in family power structure. Unlike the old days when women were economically dependent upon the families, now they become the supporters or providers. Their economic contributions to the family have dramatically changed their social status and role in the family. They have gained freedom as well as having a bigger say in all family decisions.

Generally women also enjoy many of the benefits provided for men, eg annual paid leave, sickness allowances, severance pay, workmen's compensation. The present labour legislation also provides paid maternity leave (10 weeks) for women.

Commercial firms and banks are the major employers of women who have training in secretarial courses, book-keeping and accounting. In the professional field, many women have achieved their respective status as doctors, lawyers, researchers, lecturers and even professors in the Universities. Some women are able to secure key positions in government departments and the Legislative Council. On the surface, educated women are able to achieve their goals in life as successfully as their male counterparts, but actually there still exists inequalities which I will bring out in a later part of this paper.

Statistical data reflecting women's status in contemporary Hong Kong

Recognition of women's unshaken role in economic activities is best verified by statistical analysis of demographic data in terms of sex composition, education attainment and labour force participation.

Sex composition

The sex ratio of the population (ie number of males per 1000 females) fluctuated within the 1033 to 1093 range over the period 1961 to 1986.

Education attainment

In general, males were better educated than females, but the gap has been narrowing steadily since 19861, and more rapidly since 1976. Particularly notable was the improvement in the middle levels of education for females.

Labour force participation

The total population grew at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent over the period 1961 to 1986, but the population aged 15 and above increased at a higher rate of 3.3 per cent. The labour force, which depends on the size of the population's working age (ie those aged between 15 and 64), grew at an annual rate of 3.4 per cent. The number of males in the labour forced increased at an average of 2.8 per cent a year, while for females, at 4.6 per cent a year. These differential growth rates are reflective of change both in the sex-age structure of the population and in the levels of labour participation for males and females.

The general trend over the last 10 years has been for proportions of both males and females in the labour force, in the age group 15 to 19 and 45 and above, to decrease, while the proportion of those aged 25 - 34 increase. This phenomenon was more marked for females than for males. This indicates an growth in the medium age of female workers in recent years.

The need of non-formal education for women

Since 1971 compulsory education was for six years. 1980 compulsory junior and secondary education was extended to all children up to 15 years of age. Fee and compulsory education is now available to school age children for 9 years, ie 6 years primary school and 3 years secondary school. Most parents can send their children irrespective of gender to have an education up to junior secondary school level without much economic difficulties or sex discrimination. The compulsory education does help to eliminate discrimination against females but is by no means the complete answer to the females' problems.

General lack of higher education opportunities

Education is a life-long learning process and a basic human right. In Hong Kong there is a lack of educational opportunities especially in the demand for higher

education and technical or professional training. The numbers of population who had technical or tertiary education increased tremendously in the last 10 years from 5% (those aging above 15) in 1976 to 9% in 1986. There was also a phenomenal increase in the number of female population having technical or tertiary education of non-degree courses/degree courses from 1976 to 1986. The increasing demand, however, is not met with proportionate provision by the two universities, polytechnics and tertiary education institutes. Comparison of population complete with secondary level to the population in tertiary sector is very imbalanced.

1986

Population with lower secondary level upper secondary level	Male	: 788,000
	Female	: 788,000
	Total	: 1576,000
Population of matriculation & tertiary non-degree / degree courses	Male	: 330,000
	Female	: 239,000
	Total	: 569,000

(Hong Kong 1986 By Census)

Therefore adequate resources must be directed to the provision of adult education service not only as remedy for the formal system but also for life enrichment, self development, self-actualisation and community building. There exists in Hong Kong a vast amount of untapped talent waiting to be educated. And female which shares half of the total population and 37.6% of labour force is a reservoir of human resource that national, economic and social development of the Community rest upon. (Hong Kong 1986 by Census : total economically active population 2,753,848 out of which 1,037,437 being female). Adult education programs with their characteristic of flexibility in respect of timing, access, and curriculum contents, are particularly suitable for women to accommodate their employment and family commitments.

Re-education for the married women

Besides the competitive educational system, women in Hong Kong have another confrontational drawback - 'Marriage'. Early marriages and pregnancies usually hinder females in getting higher education despite their capability. Most married women take up duty as housewives and mothers for at least several years after marriage. Womens position in the family surely has improved a great deal nowadays, but the traditional ideology of women's subordinate position is not in all cases extinguished. At home, the husband is still supposed to be the dominant decision maker. Due to physiological reasons, women generally get married earlier than men. Normally females do feel their responsibilities toward their new-born children especially when domestic help is not easily available. Under these circumstances, it is usually the women who give up chances to pursue higher education or personal careers. In some cases, with the support of domestic helpers

or day nurseries, some ambitious working mothers succeed in fulfilling the dual role as professional and mother under the pressure of overwork. Or some may seek part-time employment which is insecure and stagnant. Also the income tax which is fairly considerable, by filing income of husband and wife together, is a discouragement for married women to work. Women's multiple role as wife, mother and wage-earner produces unique educational problems not generally recognised by educators.

After years of employment and after their children have grown up, many women nevertheless would like to continue on their working lives. Re-education is therefore very necessary for them to catch up with modern technological advancement. Mass media educational programs through press, radio and television etc. are needed to bring mature women back to their professions. Re-adaptation courses, evening classes, correspondence courses, seminars, workshops are also operated for women who cannot attend formal education courses in day schools.

Alternative education ladder

In response to the deficiency of the formal education system, various adult education institutions have sprung up spontaneously to satisfy the needs of the community. These institutions include a Government Education Department in Adult Education Section, extramural studies at the two universities, polytechnics, vocational training council as well as many voluntary agencies. All sort of programs are provided for adults, irrespective of their sex, as a second opportunity to a complete education ladder, or for vocational training, for life enrichment or development of aptitude. Through attendance of these adult education programs, women thus attain access to higher education and professional training in the sophisticated and complex society of Hong Kong. These programs are numerous, with some being recreational, flexible in format, and of particular interest to women.

Recreational programs of Hong Kong Government Adult Education Section

Informal education is promoted through cultural, social and recreational activities in the evening at government school premises for men and women aged 18 and over. The programs embody a wide spectrum of activities designed to promote education through active participation and development of responsibility. Members learn to run committees, conduct meetings and discuss their common problems and interests. Interest groups in art, photography, radio, guitar, singing, dancing, cut ribbon flower and other crafts are formed. Talks and demonstrations and conducted from time to time on a variety of topics of general interest. Through participation of these activities, women are exposed to social experience that works to develop their potentials.

Parents' education

Hong Kong people have a special passion for educations and high expectation for their children's success. Many parents, especially the mothers who have been

divorced from school life for a long time, are often willing to take up studies in order to help with their children's homework. In response to this, some women centres and voluntary agencies like Caritas Adult & Higher Education Service have initiated parents' educational courses through multimedia of correspondence, audio tapes, telephone tuition, classroom lectures, talks seminars as well as group discussions. Learners can adopt their own learning schedule or format according to their convenience. These courses cover primary as well as secondary school levels with special emphasis on English and Arithmetic. Selected topics about family life education emerged in the form of lectures, exhibitions and outings as extracurricular activities. Besides the learning and re-learning of a few academic subjects, education on family planning and family management is by no means neglected. Course materials are specifically designed with much emphasis on self-directed effort. This type of self-instructional method though, requiring more motivation on the part of the learner, nevertheless invites an encouraging response from women.

Programs by Women's associations

Despite rapid industrialisation and economic progress in Hong Kong, women are still disadvantaged in the home and in the workplace. Inequalities exist in educational opportunities and job options. Provision of non-formal education for women is therefore conceived inevitable by some voluntary womens organisations, namely, the Women's Centre in the Hong Kong Council of women and Association for the Advancement of Feminism. The Women's Centre basically is a resource centre for women to serve a wide range of needs. It has a telephone answering service with volunteers on duty to give women information on any matter, including legal, medical, marital and family problems. A resource library is established which aims at facilitating women's access to information and knowledge. The library houses books and periodicals on issues related to women's concerns including family, health, childrearing and careers. In addition, the Women's Centre regularly organises educational programs on different subjects for women to develop their potential and social awareness, to enhance their roles in the family and in society. Short courses are offered like Mandarin classes, English classes, courses on women's health etc. The courses contain lectures with talks and field visits. Seminars are conducted regularly for sharing of knowledge in special issues, eg labour education, child caring, home management and civic education. The programs will keep women more alert to their living environment, help them to know themselves, their characters, potentials and build up their civil awareness and confidence.

The Association for Advancement of Feminism also organises learning projects to develop womens potential, eg career development, leadership training and identification abilities that a modern woman needs to equip for responding to challenges from different aspects. Learning activities include courses, monthly seminars and public talks. The Association also publish newsletters and handbooks giving insight to women's social participation.

Real Equity

No doubt in contemporary Hong Kong there has been quite a change in women's liberation in recent years. Hong Kong women should be educated to be of equal status with men. Discrimination has been reduced to a certain extent. Equal pay for equal jobs allows women to pursue a personal career and seek financial independence. More diversified social contacts and attainment help equality between women and men in matrimony.

In the business world

The Hong Kong business world is now entering into a modern era in which the value and beliefs of business management are increasingly different from the traditional outlook. Recruitment, training & promotion of executives are no longer based solely on ascriptive (kinship,sex) criteria but also on individual achievement and performance. Consequently more women are assuming greater responsibilities and hold top positions. The phenomenon is attributed to partly by the growing number of women taking tertiary courses in Management. The enrolment of women in the tertiary education institutes is growing at an overall increasing rate than that of men. Women are gradually making their impact and become a force difficult to ignore in the society.

Nevertheless the business world is still very sexist; according to a survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong September 1979, there were 4700 women administrators and managerial workers compared with 47,400 male workers. In other words, women were out numbered by men in the ratio of 10:1. In 1982, the corrsponding figures were 11,120 to 85,922 (ratio of 8:1). In relative terms, female administrators and managers constitute 1.3% of total female force; and 0.5% of total labour force in 1982. Though this is great improvement compared with the 0.63% of total female force and 0.2% of the total labour force in 1979.

Multiple Role of Women

In Hong Kong prevailing traditional values and social prejudice inherited from China over 100 years ago still influence the community's thinking strongly with regard to the position of women and makes Hong Kong women somewhat unequal. Many women have made it in business and the professions, but they are the exception rather than the rule. Even then, adequate income, housing and care for their children are some of the pressures they have to face, very often alone. Adequate child-care facilities in the position of breadwinner or contributory breadwinner. Indeed women's multiple roles as wife, mother and wage-earner impose unbearable and unfair burdens upon them. In addition, social educational support have yet sufficiently catered for mothers with special problems, eg nursing their handicapped children etc.

Discrimination in recruitment

Research was conducted in 1985 re the position of women in the labour market by content analysis of the recruitment advertisements on newspapers. The research attempted to focus on the hiring preferences of business organisations to determine whether women encounter any differential treatment at entry level. Discrimination at the entry level will either withhold from women the opportunities of entering higher pay and more powerful jobs or channelled them into other job categories very often stereotyped. It was found that women were quite well represented in the advertisements at first glance. On deeper analysis, however, some inequalities surfaced. Preferences for females or males applicants varied considerably between industries and occupations. Generally, female workers were preferred in the wholesale/retail business, the import/export trade and hotel/restaurant industry while the male labour was preferred in sectors of manufacturing, public utilities, financial institutions, transport, communication and multinational conglomerate corporation. There is a dense concentration of women in the clerical and secretarial position in a limited number of sectors whereas a higher percentage of men were preferred in managerial/supervisory position across all industries. In other words, women were concentrated in job categories with little internal ladder for advancement. Where women were preferred in the managerial group, it was mainly at the lower management level. The further one went up the management ladder the more scarce women were. Sex role stereotyping is still a primary factor that stands in the way of women improving their terms and prospects in employment.

Prejudice and discrimination

Few women succeed in attaining managerial posts but they have to confront problems and pressures from all dimensions. Women who secure managerial positions are usually better qualified than their male counterparts and must perform much better in the job. Very often they are placed in positions of lower status. In a 1982 survey, it was discovered that educational attainment of female administrative and managerial workers tended to be higher then that of male workers. 26% of female managers had university education compared with 21% of their male counterparts. Even when women are able to cross the managerial hierarchy, they still face a negative stereotyping as being less able to discharge responsibilities, less aggressive, less authoritative, weak in determination and less likely to stay with a job for a long time.

Marriage and career seen to be at odds with each other. The general feeling is that marriage is good for men but hinders women in their careers. A woman who decides to combine a career with marriage would have to discharge their multi responsibilities in child care, housework, employment and education/training. In Hong Kong there is every indication that child care still remains the primary responsibility of the mother whether she is a full-time housewife or a full-time worker. Women, unable to meet with re-education opportunities or child care support may be compelled to opt for less demanding and less promising job to balance the dual-career problems.

Women have traditionally been brought up to assume a subservient role. In some cases when the wives overtake the husbands in terms of salary and status, or where the wives' job contradicts their deep-rooted subordinate role, resocialisation in the women themselves as well as their husbands is by no means easy.

Equal pay for equal work

In 1975 Hong Kong became one of the cities to give equal pay for equal work in principle for men and women. It is, however, difficult to practice the principle to the full extent, especially in the private sector. In general men and women receive the same rate for full-time basis but women are generally paid less when working on a time basis. Statistics reveal that in Sept 1980, 75% of workers in manufacturing industries received daily wages of $34.55 or more (Mal $37.95 and female $32.40) and 25% received $41.80 or more (Male $65.78 and female $46.60) The overall average daily wage was $457.49 (Male $54.86 and female $40.80).

Under the Women & Young Persons (Industry) Regulations 1980, young people aged 15-17 and women are permitted to work a maximum of 8 hours a day, 6 days a week. The regulation also limits overtime employment for women to 200 hours a year and forbids young people to be employed in overtime work. However, breaches of working hours regulations are common and firms are not deterred. The Women & Young Person (Industry) Regulations of 1980 surely aims to protect women and young workers but there are disadvantages. Women workers are effected in promotion opportunities and discrimination in employment especially in the management levels.

True equality is still very much an issue in Hong Kong. In 1986, Hong Kong By Census shows that the medium monthly income from Main Employment was $3,0657 for male and $2,143 for female. Average medium monthly income being $2.573.

The abused women

Hong Kong women in the 80s are more politically conscious, more knowledgeable about society and have higher status than before. Nevertheless low self-image still exist with majority of women in middle lower or lower class families. The low perception of self-image inevitably affects the respondents' emotions and their relationship with family and society. In many families, there is no choice for the women before family and career except for those who can afford to have domestic helpers.

Nowadays women's position in the family and in society is not as bad as it used to be, but traditional ideas still persist. Many women still play the subordinate position in the family. Physical abuse of women and children is not uncommon in Hong Kong. Husbands may resort to violence because of economic problems, drugs and other reasons. Many of the victims come from new immigrants in the last 5 years with no support system of relatives who remain in China. Many seriously physically and emotionally abused women have to seek shelter in social service agencies, such as the Harmony House and Wai On House etc. The shelters offer

programs for the women and their children including group and individual counselling. Sheltering and care would be temporal to their problems without programs aiming at helping the women to help themselves, ie to be confident and independent. Deductively speaking, their lack of education and financial dependence would further accentuate their subordinate position. Continuing education is important for a woman who wants to make the most of her life. Only by education and competence can make the women a true partner in family affairs and, if need be, a co-breadwinner.

Conclusion

We have so far suggested a vast amount of situational problems in Hong Kong particularly related to women, eg their lack of educational opportunity; discrimination and social pressures that attack their confidence in marching forward for development. From an investigation of the above questions, it is obvious that there is a need for a type of continuing education system in the Hong Kong situation. It is through continuous education that women can be made conscious of their potential and hence leap for career advancement. A continuous education system is to be developed to cater for the present inadequate formal system and to provide an informal system to cover skills training or fulfil social and economic needs. Providers of non-formal education are by no means lagging in response to their foresight of needs in the community. However, without an overall co-ordination, their efforts could be duplicated or neglectful resulting in over or under provision in certain areas. Women, for example, are in great need of such facilities but are very often ignorant of the existing channels, or environmentally constrained to attend. Adult education, with the ultimate objective to enhance life enrichment, self development and community building, should be well co-ordinated among the voluntary agencies and co-operate with formal education institutes in building up a healthy and complete education system for the entire population of Hong Kong.

Classification of the recruitment advertisements by sex and by main occupations.

Occupation	% of Male	% of female
Managerial / supervisory	32.5	7.9
Secretary / stenographer	0.6	18.5
Clerical	16.1	45.2
Accounting / auditing	5.5	3.4
Accounting / auditing clerks	3.0	8.1
Selling / purchasing	23.1	12.6
Engineering / technical	11.3	0.5
Others	7.9	3.8
	100.0	100.0

Table 1 Population by Age and Sex 1961 - 1986

Age Group	Sex	1961	1971	1976	1981	1986
Under 15	M	664 015	720 120	680 410	642 365	649 638
	F	613 020	687 784	644 850	595 142	597 309
	T	1277 530	1407904	1325 260	1237 507	1246 947
15 - 24	M	201 482	392 868	496 500	600 204	520 089
	F	166 356	371 329	471 580	547 553	492 770
	T	367 838	764 197	968 080	1147 757	1012 859
25 - 44	M	508 754	487 336	571 610	751 273	914 311
	F	446 354	419 683	479 340	614 309	830 919
	T	955 108	907 019	1050 950	1365 582	1745 230
45 -64	M	207 400	341 139	415 360	477 733	516 642
	F	234 349	338 799	400 540	431 172	465 777
	T	441 749	679 938	815 900	908 905	982 419
65 and over	M	26 128	59 139	87 180	132 593	171 784
	F	61 790	118 433	155 620	194 216	236 758
	T	87 918	177 572	242 800	326 809	408 542
Total	M	1607 779	2000 602	2251 060	2604 168	2772464
	F	1521 869	1936 028	2151 930	2382 392	2623 533
	T	3129 648	3936 630	4402 990	4986560	5395 997

Table 2 Sex Ratios of Population by Age : 1961 - 1986

(Number of males per 1,000 females)

Age Group	1961	1971	1976	1981	1986
Under 5	1 060	1 055	1 081	1 093	1 088
5 - 9	1 076	1 042	1 051	1 080	1 078
10 - 14	1 126	1 046	1 040	1 067	1 096
15 - 19	1 205	1 055	1 049	1 078	1 085
20 - 24	1 216	1 062	1 057	1 114	1 032
25 - 29	1 175	1 237	1 146	1 155	1 052
30 - 34	1 153	1 225	1 291	1 219	1 082
35 - 39	1 105	1 120	1 261	1 316	1 131
40 - 44	1 121	1 097	1 125	1 284	1 218
45 - 49	1 072	1 071	1 128	1 184	1 188
50 - 54	942	1 071	1 007	1 138	1 156
55 - 59	747	990	1 031	1 067	1 079
60 - 64	589	825	956	1 014	999
65 and over	423	499	560	683	726
Overal	1 056	1 033	1 046	1 093	1 057

(Hong Kong 1986 By Census)

Table 3 Percentage Distribution of Population Aged 15 and Over by Sex and Educational Attainment: 1961-1986

Sex and Education Attainment	1961		1976		1986	
Male	%	pop/ '000	%	pop/ '000	%	pop/ '000
No Schooling/Kindergarten	9.4	88	9.2	144	7.0	148
Primary	55.7	525	43.3	680	30.8	654
Lower secondary	17.6	166	18.7	293	21.9	264
Upper secondary)						
Matriculation)	13.7	129	3.7	58	7.1	150
Tertiary:Non-degree courses)						
Tertiary:Degree courses	3.6	34	4.5	71	5.6	119
Total	100	943	100	1570	100	2122
Female						
No Schooling/Kindergarten	48.2	438	31.6	476	21.6	438
Primary	34.8	316	36.1	544	27.7	561
Lower secondary	8.4	76	12.4	187	14.3	290
Upper secondary)						
Matriculation)	7.5	68	1.7	26	6.0	121
Tertiary:Non-degree courses)						
Tertiary:Degree courses	1.1	10	1.9	29	3.0	61
Total	100	908	100	1507	100	2026

Table 4 Economically Active Population by Sex and Age: 1976, 1981 and 1986

Sex and Age Group	*1976*		*1981*		*1986*	
		%		%		%
Male						
15–19	117 120	9.3	132 184	8.2	89 068	5.2
20–24	196 740	15.6	279 603	17.3	251 714	14.7
25–34	306 700	24.1	470 020	29.0	552 532	32.2
35–44	253 790	20.1	269 409	16.6	340 086	19.8
45–54	234 210	18.5	266 353	16.5	266 605	15.5
55 and over	156 620	12.4	200 820	12.4	216 406	12.6
Total	1 265 180	100.0	1 618 389	100.0	1 716 411	100.0
Female						
15–19	122 490	18.6	115 650	13.1	72 817	7.0
20–24	152 080	23.1	220 204	24.9	231 242	22.3
25–34	125 260	19.1	229 326	25.8	344 431	33.3
35–44	93 180	14.2	112 378	12.7	173 397	16.7
45–54	91 400	13.9	111 766	12.6	118 701	11.4
55 and over	72 910	11.1	96 091	10.9	96 849	9.3
Total	657 320	100.0	885 415	100.0	1 037 437	100.0
Both sexes						
15–19	239 610	12.5	247 834	9.9	161 885	5.9
20–24	348 820	18.1	499 807	20.0	482 956	17.5
25–34	431 960	22.6	699 346	27.9	896 963	32.6
35–44	346 970	18.0	381 787	15.2	513 483	18.6
45–54	325 610	16.9	378 119	15.1	385 306	14.0
55 and over	229 530	11.9	296 911	11.9	313 255	11.4
Total	1 922 500	100.0	2 503 804	100.0	2 753 848	100.0

FIJI - WOMEN, EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT

Cema Bola Bola, Fiji Centre, University of the South Pacific

General Situation of Women

The diversity amongst Fiji women is seen from their different ethnic background, different occupational groups and the rural and urban distribution. Women have an average life expectancy of 65 years. The adult literacy rate, for women, is 74%. Government figures stated that only 17% of all women over 15 years are economically active, and of those not economically active, 68.5% are in unpaid home duties.

In 1980, the annual Employment Survey stated that 20% of all paid workers were women. The largest percentage of women paid workers are in the social personal services category especially in urban areas (31%). Of all economically active women, 23% are in agriculture, .2% in mining, 6% in manufacturing, .2% in gas/electricity and water works, .5% in construction, 15% in wholesale/retail, restaurants and hotels, 2% in transport/communication/social services and some 14% in unclassified types of work. By employment status of all economically active persons, 7.3% women are self employed 19.8% in government employment, 18.6% in the private sector, 19.1% as unpaid family workers and 10.6% are villagers.

Rural Women

The majority of Fiji women are rural dwellers dependant on agricultural and fishing activities. In settlement patterns, Fijians tend to live in villages, and other ethnic groups live as individual family farm units. The concentration of development in the urban areas, the low level of development in transportation and communication facilities is worsened by the island nature of the country thus affecting the outreach in services provided by government.

A major problem faced by rural women is the drudgery of their everyday work and the absence of tools and technology that can assist them in their work either at the home or in the farms or other economic and productive activities.

Apart from the vernacular radio broadcasts (6am-10pm), rural women do not have access to information for self education and development nor information to assist them make choices. The vernacular newspaper has very limited outreach, pertaining to urban centres and its hinterland.

Rural Fiji women contribute a lot of agricultural labour, their income is nil or very low. Women are paid $5 a day as casual farm labourers and men are paid $7 for the days work comparatively.

Adult education available to rural people is carried out by extension officers of the various government departments but the participation of women in these programs is very low. This is attributed to their lower status in society as compared to men. The number of Women's Interest Assistants of the government Ministry for Women and Social Welfare cannot effectively provide services to women because of their low number coupled with the lack of resources allocated to them for their programs. Most of these programs revolve around cooking and sewing skills that appear to reinforce women's domestic roles.

Non Government Organisations and Non-Formal Education for Women

Many NGOs are addressing women on various issues of interest to women. Women's organisations, eg National Council of Women, Fijian Women's Organisation (Soqosoqo Vakamarama), YWCA and other smaller women's groups operate at all administrative levels and are involved in aspects of non-formal education addressing women's health, literacy, education role, occupational health, peace and the environment. Most of these women's groups lack the staff and resources to effectively carry out these programs.

The University of the South Pacific, through its extension services, offers non-credit continuing education classes in liberal arts, craft development, languages and music. It also carries out participatory and action research and community outreach activities targeted at women especially on issues unaddressed by government or other NGOs, eg pilot projects on appropriate technology and information sharing.

Institutional and Community-Based Adult Education

Young women school leavers are the main target group for all institutions/schools that offer adult education programs, the majority of these schools have boarding facilities and the duration of the courses are longer. Graduates of such institutions are really not well utilised when they return to their communities because the needed infrastructure to utilise the graduates as trainers isnot available in those communities.

Young women who do not have second chance education will depend on community-based training, but the cost and outreach of such training is limited due to the geography of the country, absence of mass communication (except government owned radio) and the absence of a government policy.

Churches, youth groups and other service organisations are also addressing women's issues. There is room for more work on issues addressing education for women in Fiji.

The Fiji Centre, Extension Services, University of the South Pacific

The University of the South Pacific is a regional university and each island nation has a university centre for administration of the University distance education

under the University's Extension Services. The Fiji Centre is one of eleven country centres offering credit courses through distance education and also continuing education at the Centre as well as community based education.

The Fiji Centre has attempted to develop strategies for improving the delivery of training programs for rural women in development through the following:

participatory research with the women in the community - any findings are shared with the women at meetings

meetings with the women and other members of the community to discuss findings, needs assessment and project identification

training material and discussion papers are prepared by the centre for use at the meetings

a project is carried out with maximum use of local skills and resources. The centre secures assistance for external needs for the project

provision of information in the vernacular to rural women

sets up pilot projects for women, eg in appropriate technology

In the past we have worked with women's groups, in rural and urban communities, to trial appropriate technology projects that address the daily workload of women. We have developed strategies for the effective dissemination of smokeless woodstoves in rural villages, pilot community laundry and communal kitchen for urban low income families and innovations in fishing technology for women. At present we are working on a pilot vernacular information bulletin on appropriate technology for rural women and we have plans to introduce manual/hand operated water pumps as an experimental project for women who use wells for their domestic water need.

The centre has tried to identify more effective methods for the training of women in rural areas. I have concluded that participatory research with women is vital, supported by information sharing, distribution of short and precise discussion papers written in the vernacular, and a feasible project where the skills gained from training can be utilised and put into practise thus forming the basis for monitoring the effectiveness of women's educational and training programs.

Situation of Women in Education

Background

Fiji is a tropical Pacific nation made up of some 300 islands, with about one hundred of these uninhabited. The population is multiracial comprising of indigenous Fijians, Rotumans, and descendants of Indians, Chinese, Pacific Islanders and Europeans. In 1987 the population count was around 770,539,

females made up some 50% of the population. This multi-ethnic and multicultural population contributes to the diversity of the country. English is the main working language and Fijian and Hindi are also official languages.

The majority of the population are rural dwellers (65%) and the economy of the country is dependant on agriculture. The main export earner is sugar-cane, followed by tourism, gold, ginger and other tropical fruits and timber. There are two main urban centres, one of which is Suva the capital with a population of 200,000 and a number of small towns. Rural Fijians and Rotumans generally live in villages, the largest with 100 households, and other ethnic groups tend to live as individual farmers. Road transportation is increasing and between islands one can either travel by boat or by aeroplanes.

History

Fiji, a British colony since 1874, became politically independent in 1971. Fiji had a parliamentary democracy and enjoyed dominion status within the Commonwealth of Nations until the two military coups of 1987 after which the country declared itself a republic. Today Fiji is without a written constitution though a draft constitution that is still under limited discussion.

Informal education for women was part of the traditional socialisation process, with colonisation and development, formal and non-formal education was first introduced by the missionaries in the late 1800s especially in reading and writing skills.

Later the Methodist and Roman Catholic churches took up education of women on a broader scale, training women to become home economists, teachers, nurses and secretaries. The colonial and later governments increased educational services enabling women to enter other professions, though the number of women in technical fields is low as compared to men.

Fijian feminists have stated that historical, political and socio-economic development in Fiji have led to the further domestication of Fijian women. Traditional society had allowed for more overlapping of roles relative to the sexual division of labour. Today Fijian women are finding themselves in more defined roles almost to the point of specialisation into stereotype domestic activities.

Fiji Government Development Plan Nine 1986-1990

The objectives of government plans for education aims at providing a balanced program for academic and practical courses to enable children to cope with changes in society, develop Fiji's human resources and make education accessible to the poor and rural dwellers. Education also aims at promoting national unity for its multi-racial population.

The government education policy is designed to improve pre-school services and provide guidance services to parents. There is no reference directly relating to the

education of women in the government plans. However, one can only conclude from DP 9 statement on education that women are integrated into the education program. The Fiji government statement states that they recognise women's contribution to the development of the country. All DP 9 education objectives do not single out women (females) as a special target group. It is concluded that the achievement of such objectives will benefit the majority of women who remain in rural Fiji working in the agricultural sector. Once these women leave formal primary school, they tend not to receive any further training for women in development programs.

The government's development objectives for education of the rural and urban poor is an attempt to improve the welfare of these families especially women. However, the rate of unemployment is especially high for women as compared to men. Therefore, appropriate programs have to be developed to address the disparity.

In 1981 some 95% of young people between 6-13 years were attending school, the rest of the age group were either out of school or will attend Class 1 in the following year. In the same year, females made up 48.8% of primary students, 50.5% of secondary school students, 54% of trainee teachers and 57.4% of students in vocational-technical schools (the majority of them in this category would be typing students). Only at primary schools are females almost equal to the number of males in enrolment. In 1976 women made up 39.4% of the total student population and rose to 42.4% in 1982.

Primary Education

Government provided tuition free education for the first six years of primary school since 1973 and in 1978 increased it to eight years of primary education. In 1984 some 86% of children aged 6-16 years were enrolled in school, a 2% increase from 1980. In 1981 girls made up some 49% of all primary students. In 1984, teacher student ratio was 28:2, though a sizeable proportion of teachers are trained. There are 656 primary schools listed and nineteen are managed by the government.

Secondary education

The Government provides 6 years of secondary education, however, there is a high drop out (off) rate after primary school. The rate was 18% before 1977 and increased to 20% in the early 1980s. Girls do make up some 50% of secondary enrolment, and in recent years the enrolment of girls in secondary schools has increased more than boys. National external examinations are taken in the second, third and fourth year of secondary education. The failure rate at the latter two examination is quite high. Both these examinations are based on the New Zealand curriculum. Curriculum for the two examinations have been replaced with local one, where the students will take the examination after two years of study. There are 136 secondary schools in the country, eleven of them managed by government.

Vocational Education

The government has plans to increase its support to vocational and technical education for school leavers. In 1981 the government set up some 37 multicraft centres. Only 9 centres catered for young women, and eight were still running in 1984. Of the total vocational schools only three are managed by government. The majority (54%) of the teachers trained in 1981 were in technical/vocation subjects most of them in government schools. Of all enrolments in vocational schools, only 26% were young women.

Adult Education

Although there is no government policy on adult education, an office was set up in the Ministry of Education in 1980 for community education. At present this office, with two staff members, is within the Ministry of Youth. Government also carries out adult education programs and activities through the extension programs of its various ministries.

Success Rate in Examinations

Reports on the education of women state that males and females have similar pass rates but fewer females tend to continue with further education. About 43% of government scholarships and about 16% of other awards are taken by female students, although they get only 12% of all awards to overseas universities.

Drop out/Drop offs Amongst Female Students

By 1972 it was ascertained that female students had a high drop out rate up to their fifth year in school, this is higher for young Indian females than for other groups. After the eighth year of education, there is a reduced drop out rate amongst female students, until after the first external examination (Form 4) when the female drop out rate is twice that of the males.

Girls in vocational schools have a higher drop out rate than male students in similar schools, eg in 1981 the female drop out rate was 34% as compared to 28% for boys. The high drop out rate from all levels of the school system is attributed to the income of parents rather than any other major factor. However, the preference for the education of male children over females should also be considered.

Adult Literacy

It is assumed that the literacy level is directly related to educational attainment. Individuals are deemed "functionally literate" if they complete 5-6 years of primary education. Fiji has a literacy rate of some 81%, though the rate in 1976 was around 79%. Illiteracy is seen more amongst the Indian population of both sexes as compared to other ethnic groups. Illiteracy amongst the older age groups is higher in urban than in rural areas.

University Education

There is only one university, the University of the South Pacific which opened in 1969. More women are entering university after completing Form 6 studies. The number has increased from 39% of the total enrolment in 1981 to 42% a year later. More women are in the social sciences than in the science faculty. Few Fiji women are in the academic staff, the majority are in the technical and administrative levels. A number of Fijian women study at overseas universities.

In 1982, women made up 33.3% of students in Foundation Studies, 49.9% in diploma studies, and 39% in the degree program. Women make up a total of 42.4% of the university student population.

More women are taking advantage of the distance education services of Extension Services of the University of the South Pacific where they can acquire credit courses. There is a higher drop out rate for women. This is attributed to family and other responsibilities which they shoulder at home and at work, as well as their assumed lower level of motivation for higher educational achievements given the marital situation they are in while studying distance education.

Problems Facing Women in Education

The capability of parents to support education especially in rural areas and the urban working class, is a major factor. The limited support services for the education of young girls from rural areas is of great concern, eg boarding schools. The suitability ofthe education curriculum has been raised by education people themselves as needing a lot of changes. The prevailing attitudes towards stereotyped subjects and career choices for young women is a factor that needs to be looked into. The absence of a policy of positive discrimination in favour of women's education also warrants concern.

On adult and community education, the necessary policy and logistical and staff support is not provided by the government. Discussions to address the role of women rather than practical programs to assist women in their changing roles are needed. The home science subjects of cooking, mothercraft and sewing tend to be over-emphasised. There is inadequate government support for women as well as a lack of support from other institutions.

Government Plans for Women

Fiji Development Plan 9 is the first such plan to include a section on Women in Development, stating that the government will ensure that women are fully integrated in the national development process as equal partners with men. One such program of the government is to set up a national machinery for women. A Ministry for Women (and Social Welfare) came after the military coup in May 1987.

Criticisms against government policy on the education of women have been aired by women in the past. It appears from government programs for women, even in

the education sector, that government indirectly wants to reinforce the role of women in the kind of educational opportunities available to all young females. The situation arises because women are never consulted in the planning process relating to education policies and programs.

Women's groups have made recommendations to government to improve educational opportunities available to women, eg representation in the education planning group, improvement in curriculum content, equal opportunities for girls in scholarships, review career structures etc. Most important is for government to implement programs that will reduce the disparity that exists in Fiji, eg rural-urban facilities and opportunities, income levels and to improve the socio-economic situation of the country.

SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S LEGAL RIGHTS

Christine Bradley, Principal Project Officer of the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission

Introduction

During the eleven years that I have been associated with Papua New Guinea, it has become clear to me that only a small number of highly educated women know that they have legal rights, let alone have any idea what these rights are. The purpose of this paper is to spread the knowledge of their legal rights to a wider group of women, so that they will feel able to use the law to help themselves where this is appropriate. For this reason the presentation will be as practical as possible, with minimal use of abstractions or jargon. The paper will give an outline of the main problem areas and some possible solutions. Constraints of time and space do not allow for a detailed description of the relevant laws and legal procedures themselves.

What is meant by Women's Legal Rights?

Women's legal rights in Papua New Guinea can be divided into three categories. Firstly, there are the general rights enshrined in the Constitution, such as the right to be free from domination or oppression (section 1 of the National Goals and Directive Principles), the right to have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development of the country (section 2 of the National Goals and Directive Principles), the right to equal partnership in marriage and in parenthood (section 2(12) of the National Goals and Directive Principles), the right not to be discriminated against on grounds of their sex (section 55 of the Constitution), and so on. Secondly, there are specific "statutory" rights relating to particular issues as defined in written "statute" law (ie laws made by Parliament) and enforceable through the formal court system. Under statutory rights we will consider not only those rights which apply only to women (such as the right of deserted wives to be supported by their husbands), but also the broader rights which apply equally to men and women but which are of particular benefit to women (such as the right to protection against violence). Thirdly, there are women's rights under customary law, which are enforceable through local customary procedures or through the Village Courts.

These three types of rights are not necessarily the same. In fact, they often contradict each other. For example, some statutes contain sections which discriminate against women, such as the laws relating to polygamy, and to the division of matrimonial property. These are contrary to the provisions for equal rights in the Constitution. There are also many customary laws which contradict women's rights under the Constitution, or under statute law, or both. Examples are a man's customary right in some parts of Papua New Guinea to beat his wife,

or to keep the children if the marriage breaks down after brideprice payments have been completed, or to marry more wives whether or not the first wife consents. It could be claimed that the payment of brideprice is itself unconstitutional, since rights in women are exchanged for wealth and, as a result, most Papua New Guinea societies in which brideprice is customarily paid require wives to be subordinate to their husbands.

In theory, the inter-relationship of the three types of rights is straightforward. Where there is a conflict, the Constitution takes precedence over written law or customary law (Schedule 2.1 of the Constitution). Where there is a difference between the written law and customary law, the written law prevails. For problems which are not covered by the written law, custom may be followed, provided the custom does not go against the principles contained in the Constitution. In practice, however, customary law is administered informally by local elders or by magistrates of Village Courts untrained in either the Constitution or the written law, so disputes settled according to customary principles are rarely challenged even when they do contradict the principles of the Constitution or the written law.

The focus of this paper will be on the second type of rights mentioned, namely women's statutory rights, enforceable through the formal court system. Women's constitutional rights are valuable as a statement of ideals, to which women can and should refer, to justify their attempts to improve their status of their freedom of choice. However, general constitutional rights are of little practical value to women in solving the problems that arise in their day-to-day lives, since most of them cannot be enforced through the courts (section 25(1) of the Constitution). As for women's customary rights, these vary tremendously across Papua New Guinea's seven hundred-odd cultures. It is probably reasonable to assume that women brought up in a traditional culture know what their rights are under their own customary law and how they can use customary procedures to try to enforce these customary rights, although in practice they may not succeed because of the difficulties they often encounter as women under the male-dominated traditional legal systems.

By contrast, most women are not aware of their legal rights under the system of written laws, yet it is this system which, by and large, gives women more options than they have under custom. To use the words of a Local Court magistrate explaining to a women's group the difference between the system of customary law and the system of written law as these affect women: "Long kastam, ol meri i stap aninit long ol man, tasol long lo bilong gavman, man na meri i gat wankain rait" ("in custom, women are inferior to men, but in the government's law, men and women have equal rights"). While it would be an exaggeration to say that women are genuinely equal under the modern legal system, it is true that the written introduced laws do, generally speaking, give more recognition to women's interests than do the customary laws, as will be described later. For this reason it is important to concentrate on the written laws and how women can make better use of them for the benefit of themselves and their children.

Why Do Women Have So Little Knowledge Of Their Legal Rights?

Not only women but most Papua New Guineans have little or no knowledge of the modern law. There are a number of reasons for this. The major one is that almost all Papua New Guinea's laws have not been developed within the country, but have been brought in from overseas, mainly from Australia. As has been mentioned frequently, the introduced written laws completely contradict the customary laws that people have grown up with. In any case, the introduced laws are written in complicated English, which even educated people find hard to understand, with many technical words and phrases in Latin. The laws are published in thirteen thick volumes which fill a shelf six feet long and are only sold as a complete set costing one thousand Kina.

Apart from the leaflets now being produced by the Women and Law Committee, and one handbook for welfare officers and magistrates on maintenance and custody produced by Morobe's former Provincial Legal Officer, the only summaries of Papua New Guinea's laws which can be obtained by the general public are textbooks for university students. These are not suitable for the average reader. In schools, education on the law consists mainly in describing the processes by which laws are made in Parliament, the theory of how they are implemented through the court system, and the basic human rights as defined in the Constitution. Normally no practical information is given on specific legal rights and how to use the court system.

In addition to the lack of resource materials and of basic education about legal rights, there are very few sources of professional advice for women trying to find out about their legal rights. In theory, the Office of the Public Solicitor is expected to meet this need as one of its responsibilities. However, the Public Solicitor has offices in only five locations, and though the officers try to make visits throughout their region, they are so short of staff that they can offer little help to the general public. Most officers are involved full-time in providing a legal defence for people accused of serious crimes (most of them men), and are only able to consider giving advice or assistance in non-criminal cases where the safety of the woman is at risk or the welfare of the children is seriously threatened.

Private lawyers charge high fees that put them out of reach of all but the elite. However, in Port Moresby a group of private and government-employed lawyers recently took the initiative in setting up Lawline, a legal advice service staffed by a roster of volunteers which operates on two evenings a week at Lifeline. Some provinces have a provincial legal officer who could be asked to provide legal information and assistance for women, or the public in general, but with one or two exceptions, they do not usually make themselves available for this purpose.

Most Local and District Court magistrates and clerks of courts are usually too busy to provide anything but essential information to those people who have been able to get as far as making a complaint to the court. In any case, the magistrates and clerks themselves may not always have a full grasp of the law, due to deficiencies in training and supervision. Other persons often consulted by women for help

with their problems, such as welfare officers, church workers, women's leaders and concerned individuals who want to offer help, may have had little or no training in legal matters, and manage as best they can with whatever information they can pick up as they go along.

Having looked at why it is that women (and most men) have little knowledge of their legal rights, we can now consider what kinds of problems women today are coming up against in which they are handicapped by a lack of knowledge of their legal rights, what information and skills women need in order to be able to activate those rights, and how they can be given the information and skills that they need.

What Kind of Problems are Women Facing?

In this context I am referring only to the kind of problems where legal solutions exist and where a knowledge of their legal rights would enable women to significantly improve their immediate situation. General problems of poverty, tribal fighting, shortage of land, lack of housing, alcohol abuse by husbands, pressures from relatives and so on are faced by many women, but the law can be of little or no use to women in finding solutions. Problems such as violence from husbands, rape or sexual assault, the failure by a husband to maintain his wife and children, or of a man to maintain his illegitimate child, of custody of children and of a wife's property rights when a marriage breaks down - these are the kinds of problems which could be more easily overcome by women if they had a knowledge of their legal rights.

To take firstly the question of ensuring women's physical safety, Law Reform Commission research has shown that two-thirds of Papua New Guinea wives have been beaten by their husbands (Toft and Bonnell: 1985). In some parts of the country the figure is 100%. Law Reform Commission surveys of town-dwellers, both of low income earners and of elites, showed that one in every six wives interviewed had needed medical treatment for injuries caused by their husbands (Law Reform Commission: 1987). This is despite the fact that it is an offence under section 6 of the **Summary Offences Act**, punishable by up to 12 months' imprisonment, for any person to use force on any other (except in certain limited circumstances). Provision also exists under section 209 of the **District Courts Act** to follow a wife (or any other person) to get a Good Behaviour Order restraining her husband (or any other person) from using force against her.

Since the Women and Law Committee began their education and public awareness campaign on wife-beating in June 1987, many more women have taken legal action through the courts or the police for the protection of themselves and their children. It has not been possible to do a systematic evaluation, but many members of the public have expressed the opinion that men are now thinking twice about hitting their wives, for fear of the legal consequences.

Another aspect of women's personal safety is the need for protection against rape and sexual assault. Papua New Guinea's rate of reported rape has increased dramatically in recent years. According to figures provided by police

headquarters, the rate of reported rape for the whole country has increased by 170% in the three years from 1985 to 1988, whereas according to the National Statistical Office, the rate of growth of the population is only 2.3% annually. Particularly frightening is the proportion of victims who are very young. No up-to-date information is available, but figures for the first three months of 1985 presented at a workshop at Port Moresby General Hospital showed that 57.6% of patients alleging sexual assault were under sixteen years of age, including 13.4% who were under eights years old (Riley **el at** 1985:3). During this workshop it was also stated by the police representative that the rate of reported rape in the National Capital District at that time was nearly twice as high as in any city in the USA (Riley **et al** 1985:3). It must be emphasised too that these statistics relate only to sexual assaults which have been reported to the police or to the hospital. The real figures would be much higher.

In addition, there has been an alarming increase in gang rapes and of abductions of women from their own homes, or from places where they were going about their normal activities. Although the majority of women never undergo in reality the trauma of being raped, the lives of many women are restricted by the fear of rape. In towns and in parts of the country where the rate of rape is highest, most or even all women have to live with this fear for themselves and their daughters and the constraints on their freedom of movement that this imposes.

Protection of women from rape is primarily the responsibility of the law enforcement agencies (the police, the courts and the prisons). Women's lack of knowledge of their legal rights is not in itself problematic in relation to rape, since all women presumably know that rape is a crime, and that it is the job of the police to catch and prosecute rapists. However, women's lack of knowledge of what evidence is required for the successful conviction of a rapist means that victims often wash themselves and change their clothes before reporting the crime to the police, thus destroying valuable evidence such as samples of sperm, blood, body hair, scraps of clothing etc. which could be used by police to identify the rapist.

The best deterrent to potential rapists is the certainty of punishment. This certainty does not exist in Papua New Guinea at present, due to the seriously inadequate funding, resources and manpower provided by government to the law enforcement agencies. There will be no significant change in this situation unless government is prepared to make a political decision to provide the law enforcement agencies with whatever they require to enable them to deter rapists through the certainty they will be caught, convicted and kept in jail until their sentences are complete. In the meantime, anything which improves women's knowledge of how to take simple precautions against being raped, and how to assist police to collect the evidence necessary to secure a conviction must be welcomed.

The next most common problem affecting women is that of being deserted by or not properly maintained by their husbands. No statistics are available on how many women are deserted or neglected by their husbands, but in towns, where women usually have no land to garden on and so are completely dependent on

their husband's income, this is a common problem. Contrary to customary law, which expects that the family will be fed mainly through the labour of the wife, the modern law expects the husband to be the breadwinner. Under the written law, the husband is obliged to provide whatever money is required for the family's basic necessities, such as food, clothes, rent, water, electricity, school fees, fares to school or work, medicines, etc. This duty can be enforced in cases where the husband has money, but has deliberately chosen to neglect this family's needs. A poor man who simply does not have enough money for these things cannot be prosecuted for not providing them. Deserted wives can ask the Local or District Court for a maintenance order against their husbands for themselves and their children (even if they themselves are working), under the **Deserted Wives and Children Act**. Wives who are not being properly maintained by their husbands can also use the **Deserted Wives and Children Act** to ask for a maintenance order, whether or not their husbands are still living with them.

The number of unmarried mothers is growing fast, even in rural areas. One recent study of a Tolai village found that of women under thirty years old who had had a child, over 40% had never been married (Bradley and Peberdy: in press). Unmarried mothers who are not receiving adequate maintenance for their children from the children's father can also apply for a maintenance order for their children (but not for themselves) using either the **Deserted Wives and Children Act** or the **Child Welfare Act**. In some cases they can also apply for a custody order to prevent the father or his relatives from taking the child or children away, which some men think they have the right to do if they are paying maintenance.

A problem which deserves mention at this point is that some women find when they apply for a maintenance order through the Local or District Court that the law does not regard them as married. The law recognised two kinds of marriage: **customary marriage**, where the parties have been married according to the customs of one or both, or **statutory marriage**, where the ceremony was carried out by a person licensed by the Registrar General to perform such marriages according to the rules laid down in the **Marriage Act**. Statutory marriages are not common: in 1987, only just over four hundred such marriages took place between Papua New Guineans. It is not known how many customary marriages took place in the same year because customary marriages are not registered. Proving to a formal court that a customary marriage exists therefore involves bringing evidence as to what the parties' marriage customs are, and whether or not they were properly complied with. If the customs were not properly followed (perhaps because the couple were living away from their home, or because they are from different tribal groups and followed a mixture of customs), the marriage is not valid in the eyes of the law. The main result is that if deserted, these women are not able to claim any maintenance for themselves, but only for their children if they have any. In addition, they cannot bring a prosecution for adultery.

A **marriage in a church** has no separate legal status, but may be regarded as a customary marriage, or a statutory marriage, or as neither, depending on the circumstances. It counts as a customary marriage if the ceremony was a blessing of a customary marriage already performed according to custom, or if having a ceremony in church has become the customary way of getting married in that

particular area. It can be recognised as a statutory marriage only if the priest or minister was properly licensed and followed correctly the procedures laid down in the **Marriage Act**.

The two types of marriage have different implications in a number of respects, the main ones being for the dissolution of marriage and for polygamy. A customary marriage may be dissolved by custom without recourse to any formal court, whereas a statutory marriage may only be dissolved by the National Court. A man married customarily may marry as many wives by custom as his custom allows, whereas no person married by statute may take another spouse, whether by custom or by statute, unless the statutory marriage is first dissolved in the National Court, otherwise bigamy is committed.

Another increasing problem for women is the breakdown of marriage and the consequent difficulties of arranging who will have the custody of the children, and how property will be divided. Most Papua New Guinea societies are patrilineal (ie clan membership is through the father), and the custom in these societies is that a man who has made the proper customary payments (whether as part of the brideprice or a specific payment for each child) is entitled to keep the child, whether or not the marriage breakdown was his fault, and regardless too of how well or badly he treats the children.

As a result, many women stay in unhappy marriages so as not to lose their children, or give up their children without a fight if the marriage breaks down completely. Women who do leave and take their children with them often find that the husband later follows them and takes the children back by force. In cases where the wife has been successful in obtaining a maintenance order against her husband for the support of the children, it is not usual for the husband to try to evade paying the order by taking the children back against the wife's will. Unless the wife had also obtained a custody order with the maintenance order, she will be unable to get the police or the Local or District Court to take action for the return of the children, unless she goes to the National Court. This is difficult for most women, since it requires a lawyer.

These kinds of problems over custody of children could be largely avoided if women were aware that they do have the right to apply in the Local and District Courts for custody on the basis of the parents' (usually the father's) rights in the child, the courts of the formal legal system award custody solely on the basis of the child's rights - according to what is best for the child, rather than for the parent.

In deciding what is best for the child the courts will consider not only the material comfort of the child but also the moral, emotional and spiritual environment which each parent can provide. Customary payments made by the man or his wife or children are not necessarily taken into account, nor is the fact that a wife may have no independent income. If the court feels that it is in the child's best interests to be cared for by its mother, it will award custody to her and the husband will be ordered to make payments to the mother for the upkeep of the child. Of course enforcement of the order for maintenance may bring its

own difficulties, but the point remains that many women lose their children on the breakdown of their marriage simply because they do not know that they have the right to apply for custody under the modern legal system.

Another area where women commonly lose out if their marriage breaks down is in the division of matrimonial property. The formal courts have no powers to grant divorce from a customary marriage, nor to make orders for dividing the property of such a marriage. These matters are supposed to be dealt with according to custom, and come under the Village Courts. The National Court can deal with divorce and division of matrimonial property for a statutory marriage, but the statute law is here in line with a common principle of customary law, which is that each partner keeps what he or she brought into the marriage, or has paid for during the marriage. Since men have more access to money than do women, it is usually the husbands who pay for the major items of family property. If the couple split up, the husband therefore keeps most of the property, regardless of the fact that often it was the wife's contribution to keeping the family (either by her labour in the food gardens or by her own earnings) which allowed him to use his money to purchase the items. If women were aware of this situation, they would be able to ensure some measure of financial protection for themselves by insisting on a fairer division of income and property during the marriage, and/or by ensuring that any major purchase (especially the purchase of a house) is made in joint names.

Adultery is a problem for many marriages. The Law Reform Commission's research on domestic violence found that sexual jealousy (covering both real and suspected adultery) is one of the main causes of problems in marriage (Ranck and Toft: 1986). Sometimes it is the wife who commits adultery and gets beaten for it, sometimes it is the husband who is at fault and then beats his wife when she finds out about it and complains to him. A study by the Psychology Department of UPNG found that most rural people interviewed regarded adultery as a very serious offence (Wuilleman **et al**: 1986). There is a need for women who are accused of adultery in the Local of District Courts to understand the laws concerned, in order to protect themselves against being unfairly penalised. This is not to excuse adultery, but every act of adultery involves two partners, and the way the current law is being used frequently penalises only the woman.

Under the written law, an aggrieved spouse can only take the third party to court for adultery, not his or her own spouse. A husband whose wife has committed adultery usually deals with it by beating his wife and possibly also asking for compensation from the man through the Village Court. Where it is the husband who commits adultery, the wife dare not beat her husband as punishment, so she often vents her anger by taking the other woman to the Local or District Court and getting her imprisoned. The written law only allows for punishment by court fine or imprisonment, rather than permitting one or both guilty parties to help restore the balance by paying compensation. Because the current laws have not been amended since they were introduced in the early part of this century, the maximum fine permitted remains fixed at K6. This is plainly ridiculous, so many magistrates choose the option of imprisoning the woman, especially if she has children at home. There is no evidence to show that imprisonment actually stops

the adultery. In fact, it may have the opposite effect, since those who have been imprisoned for adultery tend to feel that they have paid the price for their behaviour and are entitled to do what they like afterwards. Also, imprisonment is likely to make reconciliation of the spouses even harder to achieve.

Women are sometimes wrongly imprisoned for adultery because they do not understand what is involved in the case and do not speak up for themselves. For example, it is necessary for the complainant (the person bringing the charge of adultery) to first prove to the court that he or she is legally married to the person with whom the defendant is accused of committing adultery. This is not always easy, as has already been mentioned. In many cases, the complainant is not legally married, and therefore has no right to bring the case to court at all. Another element to be proved in court before the defendant can be convicted is that the defendant knew at the time that the sex partner was married. Older men commonly seduce young girls by claiming to be divorced and promising marriage, and when such a girl is taken to court by the man's wife, she may admit that she slept with the man without pointing out that she did not know at that time that the man was married. If magistrates fail to insist on proper proof of marriage, or omit to ask the girl is she knew the man was married, women may be wrongfully jailed. Although most magistrates do their best to be fair, they often receive only minimal training and supervision, and have very heavy workloads. This can lead in some instances to wrongful convictions, which could have been avoided if the defendant had had more knowledge of the law.

Adultery is an example of a situation where customary law may actually be fairer to women and more likely to mend the marriage then the introduced law. In Village Courts, (which apply the customary law of their area), a person can usually take both adulterous persons to court, and ask for compensation from both of them. The rules of evidence are much less strict in the Village Courts, so proving the adultery is easier. A Village Court can also make an order for the adulterers to stay away from each other in future, something which the Local and District Courts cannot do. However, there are other difficulties that women face in bringing their cases to the Village Court (which it is beyond the scope of this article to describe) that mean women to not necessarily get a better deal in adultery cases before the Village Courts, whether as complainants or defendants. The Justice Department is currently considering bringing in a new law on adultery which would allow both guilty parties to be brought before the Local or District Courts and be punished by paying compensation instead of by imprisonment.

What Information and Skills do Women Need?

The previous section has given some idea of priority areas where women urgently need knowledge of their rights under the modern system of written laws. They need clear and simple information on how to use the law to protect themselves from violence, both from attacks by their husbands, and from sexual assault either by strangers, or by uncles, father, brothers, etc. They also need basic information on how to use the law to protect themselves and their children if something goes wrong in their marriage; how to claim maintenance for themselves and their children; how to get custody of their children; how to protect their property rights

in case of divorce or death of the husband; how to defend themselves from adultery charges, and so on.

Secondly, women also need to have some understanding of the powers of the various courts and how each operates. In Papua New Guinea there are: Village Courts, which apply custom only; Local Courts, which apply a mixture of custom and introduced law; District Courts, which are governed mainly by introduced laws and deal with more serious matters than the Local Courts; Children's Courts, which are concerned with matters affecting children; the National Court, which deals with serious crimes such as rapes and sexual assaults, and all matters concerning statutory marriage; and finally the Supreme Court, which hears appeals from National Court and considers matters affecting the interpretation of the Constitution. With the exception of the Supreme Court, all of these courts have powers to deal with some matters, for example the custody of child, depending on the circumstances, but they do not all apply the same criteria. Sometimes it is laid down by the law which court a woman must use, but sometimes she has a choice, and needs to know which is most likely to suit her purposes best.

Thirdly, women need to understand court procedures and terminology. Even if they know what their rights are, and which court to use, many women choose not to seek help from the formal courts because the whole business is strange and frightening to them. Court personnel use specialised English or even Latin vocabulary, which adds to women's confusion and feelings of inadequacy. The need to understand the standard basic procedures, like how to make a complaint, how to serve a summons, how to collect simple items of evidence and present them clearly, how to appeal if necessary, and so on. If women had some idea of what was involved, what the terminology means, and how long everything is likely to take, they would be much more likely to try to take up their legal rights through the formal courts. There is also a need to develop women's self-confidence and verbal skills, because most women are not used to speaking up for themselves, especially in front of men (and courts are usually all-male). Women should also be encouraged to participate more equally in the administration of justice as magistrates and lawyers: currently almost all magistrates in Village Courts, Local Courts and District Courts are men, all judges are men, and nine out of ten lawyers are men.

Fourthly, women in employment have a particular problem relating to their position in the workforce. They need to know how to insist on their entitlements, be recognised as head of household where applicable, deal with sexual harassment from bosses and colleagues, ensure they are not unfairly discriminated against over redundancies or promotion, and so on. Some employed women can turn to their unions for advice, but many do not know how to get this kind of information.

How can Women be given the Information and Skills they Need?

As many methods as possible should be used to encourage women to acquire the information and skills they need to activate their legal rights. Basic legal rights, for boys as well as for girls, should be taught in schools as part of the curriculum.

Non-formal methods of education should also be used to reach adults, through workshops, and through public awareness campaigns using leaflets and posters, radio and television, and the newspapers. Although some women's organisations, Provincial Offices of Information, and churches organise workshops from time to time on women's legal rights, they have great difficulty getting hold of appropriate resource material. Unfortunately, I have found that where workshops have to rely entirely on their own local magistrates, welfare officers or police, they are sometimes given completely wrong information.

There is therefore an urgent need for concrete, reliable and accessible information for these organisations to work from, such as more leaflets in Pidgin and Hiri Motu like the ones produced by the Women and Law Committee on wife-beating, on maintenance and custody for deserted wives, and for unmarried mothers, which women themselves can use to handle their own cases in court where no legal assistance is available; more detailed handbooks on different aspects of family law for welfare officers, church workers and other people in the helping role; a women's legal rights resource book for use in workshops, with a chapter on each of the main topics, like citizenship, marriage and what it entails legally, maintenance for deserted wives and children and for illegitimate children, divorce, married women's property programmes in English, Pidgin and Hiri Motu and in local languages wherever possible on all these topics; and finally visual materials, such as videos and slide shows.

In conclusion it is necessary to consider who is to produce this material and who is to pay for it. At the moment, it is nobody's job, officially. The Women and Law Committee was formed to make a start on providing legal information to women, but the Committee is just a voluntary body, and all its money comes from voluntary donations, mostly from overseas. Ideally this work should be fully funded by government and should be carried out by full-time public servants perhaps within the Office of the Public Solicitor. However, this solution is not likely to be implemented in the foreseeable future, because of the cost involved.

My last point is that we must not raise false hopes among women that the law is the answer to all their problems. There are many areas where the laws are inadequate, and even where legal remedies exist, taking the problem to court may not be the best way of resolving it. It is important therefore that information on women's legal rights be made available also to men wherever possible, on the assumption that men are more likely to compromise and make out-of-court agreements with women if they know that the women could go to court if necessary. In any case, most of this debate is irrelevant to a large proportion of rural women in PNG, who are out of reach of the Local and District Courts, and have no option but to rely on the prevailing customary law, as interpreted by the local male leaders.

EXPLORATIONS OF ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE RURAL WOMEN OF SICHUAN PROVINCE

Xue Ming, Sichuan Educational Committee

There is a Chinese saying "Women hold up half the sky". Women in China have on their shoulders the tasks of socialist material production, spiritual production and having children. In our countryside, womens labor force makes up half of the total labour force. As an important force to the development of rural productivity, they are working shoulder to shoulder with men in the forefront of production. The quality of women, therefore, has a direct effect on the development of rural productivity and realisation of agricultural modernisation. In the construction of socialist spiritual civilisation their quality, as citizens and mothers, is of particular importance to cultivating their children, establishing a better family social atmosphere and making themselves excellent citizens with ideals, morals, knowledge and disciplines. We always pay much attention to the problem of women's education. Equal educational rights are ensured for men and women in our constitution. Both general education and higher education are open for women. In addition, we have been developing an anti-illiteracy campaign and adult education among women, which has offered a vast field for them to be educated.

In Sichuan, this work began shortly after the founding of PRC. Sichuan has 49.81 million women, who make up 48.3 per cent of the total population (103,195 million) of the province. To improve the quality of rural women, we have done a lot of work over the past thirty years. According to the investigation, the proportion of non-illiterates among the young and middle-aged women of the countryside has come up to over 80 per cent from 10 per cent in the initial post-liberation period. Since the Party's Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, we have been making a thorough reform in the rural areas, in the course of which women have changed a lot. More and more women in the countryside have begun to care for State affairs and reforms and have enhanced their sense of participation. They have been making an effort to pursue a civilised, healthy and scientific life-style, overcome the mentality of self-abasement and dependence, and establish a new outlook on women, marriage and family. In such circumstances, they are eager to acquire elementary education and techniques so as to improve their own quality and meet the needs of our social development.

To make the best use of the situation, we have been trying our best to supply opportunities for them to receive education. According to the statistics we have got from Sichuan Women's Federation, during 1987, the short-term training class for women cadres was run 16,868 times in the whole province with 133,357 person-times present; and the applied-technique training class was run 54,991 times with 561,169 person-times present. This year, 16,859 women got a chance to study in the agricultural broadcast schools and 9402 of them got their graduation

certificates. In 1988, around 2 million women took part in the "3 learnings 3 competitions" activity organised by Sichuan Women's Federation, which means learning science and techniques, learning commodity economy knowledge, learning general knowledge of the law and the competitions in diligence, contribution and new habits. The statistics from 19 districts, cities and autonomous prefectures suggest that various applied-technique training classes conducted by the Women's Federations at all levels have been run over 63,000 times in this activity. Through the training, more than one million women have preliminarily mastered one or two techniques, which has opened a way for them to make a fortune and mobilise their enthusiasm for developing production. This has also made a contribution to the development of the rural economy and the improvement of womens quality in science, culture, ideology and morals. In Ji Qing Town, Zhong Jiang County there are 2864, 50-40 year old women, and 2539 of them have been training with applied-techniques in the cultural and technical school these years. This has a great pushing effect on the economic development of the whole town. The output value of the planting trade went up from 3.8 million+ of 1981 to 10.72 million+ of 1987. As to the breeding trade taken up by the women of this town, the output value rose from 24000+ in 1981 to 286810+ in 1987. The enterprises of Ji Qing employ 1050 women workers, who make up 50.8 per cent of the total workers. From them, 76 women, through training, were chosen as administrative cadres, making up 40.2 per cent of the total administrative cadres. The plastic weaving factory of Ji Qing managed by a woman director, Leng Guo Qun, has 702 workers, of whom 87.9 per cent are women. This factory achieved output value of 2.14 million+ in 1987, and the average income for each worker amounted to 3469+. Of the women workers 5 were chosen as "3.8" red-banner pacesetters of the district or the city, and 135 were chosen as "3.8" red-banner pace-setters of the county. In Jiao Chang town Wang Cang county, there is a young woman called Hou Feng Uing, who dug into the technique of raising silkworms and got excellent results in her study. After she finished her study in the training class, she not only became well-off herself through raising silkworms but also passed on her technical skills to other villagers. With the effort of Hou and her companions, the income of this town from silkworm cocoon went up from 1926+ of 1982 to 50000+ of 1987. People speak highly of her for her work. Having graduated from the agricultural broadcast school, Xie Chun Rong, a young woman of Xing Fu village, Jin Niu district of Chengdu, made good use of the advantage of her village, which is located in hilly land and is rich in green feed, investing over 2600+ in a family rabbit warren. She supplied fine-bred rabbits at preferential prices for the local peasants, for which she was praised by the masses and cadres and won the title of excellent breeder of the district. Zhu Ke Qing of Huang Jin town Zhong County has mastered quite a few techniques on cultivating edible fungus through training, and gained 10000+ from this in 1987. From adult education, women in the countryside have not only learned some knowledge and techniques but also had their social position changed with it. Among the 1589 women students of the agricultural technical school in Ming Zhong town Wu Sheng County who have completed their courses, 84 have been chosen cadres at the basic level. In Yu Zui town Jiang Bei county, 29 women who trained have been chosen as people's representatives of the town and 9 women who received the same training have been made the village heads.

As a developing socialist country, China has its educational development restricted by the level of its economic development. The slow progress of its rural economy has interfered with the women in their reception of adult education. The following problems should be taken into consideration.

There are still some women illiterates in the countryside. According to the statistics we have got from some places, young and middle-aged women illiterates in the countryside of Sichuan still make up 14.8 per cent of the age group. In Kai County, the proportion of non-illiteracy has come up to 91.4 per cent after the basic anti-illiteracy campaign, yet 19.2 per cent of the young and middle-aged women remain illiterate. We have been placing the emphasis of the campaign on women and the problem with those who remain illiterate turns out to be the most difficult one for us to deal with. In the three villages of Mian Yang in which we made an investigation, there are 996 15-40 year old women, of whom 15-25 year old illiterates make up 15.3 per cent and 26-40 year old illiterates make up 34.1 per cent. These women illiterates are usually burdened with heavy housework and productive labour. With no forceful measures, we can hardly fulfil the task of anti-illiteracy among the rural women.

To enhance the educational level of the rural women is an important task confronting us. According to the typical statistics, among the young and middle-aged women of the present day, those with primary schooling make up 49 per cent, those with junior middle schooling make up 30.68 per cent and those with senior middle schooling make up only 4.36 per cent. Almost all the girls can enter the primary schools, but they can not be stabilised and only a few of them can enter the schools of higher grade. The investigation we made in Wu Sheng shows that among the children of school age, 51 per cent of the girls and 49 per cent of the boys entered the primary school, but among these primary school pupils, only 35 per cent of the girls and 65 per cent of the boys entered the middle school. Of every 10000 peasant women, only 2.21 have received secondary school education and few have received higher education. We will carry on adult education to change the present situation.

From the situation of our adult-education development we can see that the scale of adult education for peasant women should be expanded. According to the statistics from Jiang Bei, Wu Sheng and Zhong Jiang, the proportions of the young and middle-aged women who have received adult education are 23.2 per cent, 23 per cent and 32.2 percent. Most of the women who have received adult education are unmarried, while a few of them are married. As to the specialised subjects that the women take, most women of sixteen and under take part in the study of cultural classes while most women of seventeen to twenty take part in the study of technical classes. In the technical classes, most prefer to take the short-term training on applied techniques rather than the long-term training on comprehensive agricultural knowledge. In a word, around 60-70 per cent of the women in the countryside who are in need of education have not been organised to enter the field of adult education of different kinds and different levels for study.

There are several reasons for this. First, the influence of the feudal idea of regarding men as superior to women, which has existed in China for several thousand years, has not been eliminated yet. The rural women of the 1980s have a stronger desire to learn knowledge and techniques and have basically shaken off the feudal ethical code and customs, but the feudal sense of regarding men as honourable and women as lowly still has a great influence upon some low-educated families and the places where culture is underdeveloped. Prejudice and discrimination from society and family are still the main obstacles in the way of women receiving education.

Second, the rural productivity of our country is making slow progress at the present time. Having been fettered by the self-sufficient natural economy over a long period of time, the peasant women are short-sighted and lack the sense of urgency and self-confidence to learn cultural and scientific knowledge. They are satisfied with the traditional mode of production and lifestyle, busy all the year round and content with things as they are.

Third, some people are inbred with utility thinking. As we have failed to solve the problem of unfair distribution and the inversion of mental work and physical work which has arisen in the course of the reforms, a new thinking of regarding study as useless is causing trouble in some places. Many girls of 15 or 16 have left their home towns to work for cash as child labourers. They think it makes no difference whether they study or not, since there are too many middle school students to be put to use.

Fourth, with the appearance of the contractual system of job responsibility, family relations between generations have changed in the countryside. Of the 6997 families in Bai Long Town De Yang city, the families of one generation make up 13.14 per cent, two generations make up 61.81 per cent, and three generations make up 23.63 per cent and those of four generations make up 18.15 per cent. The generation relationship has a direct concern with the income of the peasants. Generally speaking, it is easier for a family with more people to gain more money and become better-off. If a family is in easy circumstances and has enough labour forces, it would supply more opportunities for women to receive education. In the agricultural technical schools, the proportion of unmarried women students is usually bigger than that of married women students. As to those married women, most of them do not live with their parents. While taking part in productive labour, they have to look after their children. The heavy family burden also prevents them from receiving education.

Fifth, the administrative structure of running schools for adult education remains to be adjusted. In the rural areas of Sichuan, most of the cultural and technical schools for peasants are gathered in towns, this has made it difficult for some women to study. Being burdened with productive labour and housework, they can hardly spare their time to go to town to study. In addition, neither the teaching materials nor the teaching methods can fully meet the real needs of the women, which has dampened many women's initiative in receiving adult education.

In order to take further steps to raise cultural and technical level of the women, and spur on them on to receive adult education, we put forward the following suggestions.

To strengthen propaganda and education among the broad masses so as to enhance their understanding, we will make people realise that reforms are carried on in the countryside today and that competitive mechanism have been brought into every field. In this circumstance, the realisation of agricultural modernisation, the development of agricultural economy and the promotion of social progress will all turn out to be empty talk if we fail to enhance the quality of women, who make up about 50 per cent of the population and play the role of "holding up half the sky" in politics, economics, science, culture, society and their families. At the same time, we will make the women themselves realise that to enhance their own quality is an important thing which has something to do not only with the guarantee of their legal rights and the consolidation of their social status but also with the vitalisation of our rural economy and the promotion of our social progress. It is not only the business of women themselves or the business of educational departments to carry on active propaganda work to enhance the women's consciousness of receiving adult education. All kinds of factors, such as politics, laws, economy, culture, science, technology and education, are involved in the work of enhancing women's equality and raising their social status radically. It is necessary for all quarters to give support and attach great importance to this work. With the joint concern and efforts of the whole society, we can do well in this work.

The educational departments ought to take the initiative in co-operating with the Women's Federation. The Women's Federation plays an important part in mobilising women to receive adult education. The educational departments should co-operate with the Women's Federation in working out a plan for anti-illiteracy and some policies and decrees that are helpful in the promotion of womens study, such as the Anti-illiteracy Decree and Decree of Commendation and Reward, and bring the competitive mechanism into women's study. The Women's Federations at different levels have done a lot of work in the past few years. They make efforts to create study conditions for the women, (and) praise and reward the individuals and collectives that have made greater contributions to the adult education. With their help, many women in the countryside of our province have taken off the "illiteracy" label.

We ought to solve the women's real difficulties in the light of their characteristics and needs, adopt different forms and content for running schools in line with different persons to enable them to receive adult education consciously. In Nan Chuan County, courtyard-teaching units have been set up to help the nearby women with heavy family burdens in their study. In this county there are 209 teaching classes and 594 teaching units, which have recruited 13000 women for study and eliminated illiteracy of 10266 women. The county of E Bian has been combining the anti-illiteracy teaching with the teaching of popular science knowledge and applied techniques, in the meanwhile it has unfolded a "Two Learning" activity of learning to read and write and learning techniques. At the present time, we should conduct more short-term training classes for married

women that are combined with the reality of their production and life and have more training classes run by villages or production teams so that the women do not have to go far to study. In Jiang You County, there is only one married woman among the 147 women students in the long-term classes, while among the 184 women in the short-term classes, there are 71 married women. In the embroidery class, the students are all women. The agricultural school of Zhong Qu in De Yang City has run 153 times the training classes of birth-control and maternal and child hygiene with each term lasting fifteen days to one month. During this period, 7942 women attended the classes and 80 per cent were married women among them. What the school did has given a vigorous push to the work of birth control in this area, for which the school was praised by the provincial Party committee. The facts above suggest that the broad rural women are willing and able to receive adult education provided we pay attention to the women's characteristics and suit their needs.

We should compile the teaching materials in the light of women's actual conditions. It's better for us to rely mainly on the individual contents and simultaneously consider the systematic use of materials. The educational departments will co-operate with the Women's Federation in compiling the materials, with the latter being editor in chief. We should lay the stress of anti-illiteracy education on the general knowledge courses while using some applied technical material as supplementary reading. Generally speaking, the teaching materials in use are classified as the following: the materials on spiritual civilisation (ideological morals, human ideals, social ethics, civilisation and courtesy, women's character, etc); the materials on policies and laws (marriage law, inheritance law, the law on protecting children, etc); the materials about the general knowledge of women's life (birth control, maternal and child hygiene, love and marriage, dietetics, environmental sanitation, etc); the materials about the applied techniques (the planting, the breeding, the processing, the service, etc).

We should spread the idea of respecting the old and giving presents to parents and build up a family of unity and harmony. And what is more, we think it necessary to encourage three generations to live together so as to organise a bigger family. In the countryside, such family is probably helpful to the peasants in their building up family fortunes and also to the women in their receiving adult education. This point of view, I hope, will arouse the world's attention.

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